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NARRATIVE

OF

TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES,

&c.

VOL. III.

THE

TRAVELS

AND

ROMANTIC ADVENTURES

OF

MONSIEUR VIOLET,

AMONG THE

SNAKE INDIANS AND WILD TRIBES OF THE GREAT WESTERN PRAIRIES.

WRITTEN BY

CAPT. MARRYAT, C.B.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, & LONGMANS,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1843.

NARRATIVE

OF

TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES,

&c.

CHAPTER I.

We had now entered the white settlements of the Sabine river, and found, to our astonishment, that, far from arriving at civilization, we were receding from it; the farms of the Wakoes and well-cultivated fields of the Pawnee-Picts, their numerous cattle and comfortable dwellings, were a strong contrast to the miserable twelve-feet-square mud-and-log cabins we passed by. Every farmer we met was a perfect

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picture of wretchedness and misery; their women dirty and covered with rags, which could scarcely conceal their nudity; the cattle lean and starving; and the horses so weak, that they could scarcely stand upon their legs.

Where was the boasted superiority of the Texians over the Indian race? or were these individuals around us of that class of beings who, not daring to reside within the jurisdiction of the law, were obliged to lead a borderer's life, exposed to all the horrors of Indian warfare and famine? Upon inquiry, we discovered that these frontier men were all, more or less, eminent members of the Texian Republic, one being a general, another a colonel; some speakers of the House of Representatives; and many of them members of Congress, judges, and magistrates. Notwithstanding their high official appointments, we did not think it prudent to stop among them, but pushed on briskly, with our rifles across the pommels of our saddles; indeed, from the

covetous eyes which these magistrates and big men occasionally cast upon our horses and saddle-bags, we expected at every moment that we should be attacked.

A smart ride of two hours brought us to a second settlement, which contrasted most singularly with the first. Here, all the houses were neat and spacious, with fine barns and stables; the fields were well enclosed, and covered with a green carpet of clover, upon which were grazing cattle and horses of a superior breed.

This sight of comfort and plenty restored our confidence in civilization, which confidence we had totally lost at the first settlement we had fallen in with; and perceiving, among others, a dwelling surrounded with gardens arranged with some taste, we stopped our horses and asked for accommodation for ourselves and beasts. Three or four smart young boys rushed out, to take care of our horses, and a venerable old man invited us to honour

his hearth. He was a Mormon, and informed us that hundreds of farmers belonging to that sect had established themselves in East Texas, at a short distance from each other, and that, if we were going to travel through the Arkansas, and chose to do so, we could stop every other day at a Mormon farm, until we arrived at the southern borders of the state of Missouri.

We resolved to avail ourselves of this information, anticipating that every Mormon dwelling would be as clean and comfortable as the one we were in; but we afterwards found out our mistake, for, during the fifteen days' journey which we travelled between the Sabine and a place called Boston, we stopped at six different Mormon farms, either for night or for noon meals, but, unlike the first, they were any thing but comfortable or prosperous. One circumstance, however, attracted particularly our attention; it was, that, rich or poor, the Mormon planters had superior cattle and

horses, and that they had invariably stored up in their granaries or barns the last year's crop of every thing that would keep. Afterwards I learned that these farmers were only stipendiary agents of the elders of the Mormons, who, in the case of a westward invasion being decided upon by Joe Smith and his people, would immediately furnish their army with fresh horses and all the provisions necessary for a campaign.

One morning we met with a Texian constable going to arrest a murderer. He asked us what o'clock it was, as he had not a *watch*, and told us that a few minutes' ride would bring us to Boston, a new Texian city. We searched in vain for any vestiges which could announce our being in the vicinity of even a village; at last, however, emerging from a swamp, through which we had been forcing our way for more than an hour, we descried between the trees a long building, made of the rough logs of the black pine, and as we advanced, we perceived

that the space between the logs (about six inches) had not been filled up, probably to obtain a more free circulation of air. This building, a naked negro informed us, was Ambassadors' Hall, the great and only hotel of Texian Boston.

Two hundred yards farther we perceived a multitude of individuals swarming around another erection of the same description, but without a roof, and I spurred on my horse, believing we should be in time to witness some cockfighting or a boxing-match; but my American fellow-travellers, better acquainted with the manners and customs of the natives, declared it was the "Court House." As we had nothing to do there, we turned our horses' heads towards the tavern, and the barking of a pack of hungry dogs soon called around us a host of the Bostonians.

It is strange that the name of city should be given to an unfinished log-house, but such is the case in Texas; every individual possessing

three hundred acres of land calls his lot a city, and his house becomes at once the tavern, the post-office, the court-house, the gaol, the bank, the land-office, and, in fact, every thing. I knew a man near the Red River, who had obtained from government an appointment of postmaster, and, during the five years of his holding the office, he had not had a single letter in his hand.

This city mania is a very extraordinary disease in the United States, and is the cause of much disappointment to the traveller. In the Iowa territory, I once asked a farmer my way to Dubugue.

"A stranger, I reckon," he answered; "but no matter, the way is plain enough. Now, mind what I say: After you have forded the river, you will strike the military road till you arrive in the prairie; then you ride twenty miles east, till you arrive at Caledonia city; there they will tell you all about it."

I crossed the river, and, after half an hour's

fruitless endeavours, I could not find the military road, so I forded back, and returned to my host.

"Law!" he answered; "why, the trees are blazed on each side of the road."

Now, if he had told me that at first, I could not have mistaken, for I had seen the blazing of a bridle-path; but as he had announced a military road, I expected, what it imported, a military road. I resumed my journey and entered the prairie. The rays of the sun were very powerful, and, wishing to water my horse, I hailed with delight a miserable hut, sixteen feet square, which I saw at about half a mile from the trail. In a few minutes I was before the door, and tied my horse to a post, upon which was a square board bearing some kind of hieroglyphics on both sides. Upon a closer inspection, I saw upon one side "Ice," and upon the other, "P O S T O F F."

"A Russian, a Swede, or a Norwegian," thought I, knowing that Iowa contained eight

or ten thousand emigrants of these countries. "Ice—well, that is a luxury rarely to be found by a traveller in the prairie, but it must be pretty dear; no matter, have some I must."

I entered the hut, and saw a dirty woman half-naked, and slumbering upon a stool, by the corner of the chimney.

"Any milk?" I inquired, rousing her up.

She looked at me and shook her head; evidently she did not understand me; however, she brought me a stone jug full of whisky, a horn tumbler, and a pitcher of water.

"Can you give my horse a pail of water?" I asked again.

The woman bent down her body, and dragging from under the bed a girl of fourteen, quite naked, and with a skin as tough as that of an alligator, ordered her to the well with a large bucket. Having thus provided for my beast, I sat upon a stump that served for a chair, and once more addressed my hostess.

"Now, my good woman, let us have the ice."

"The what?" she answered.

As I could not make her understand what I wanted, I was obliged to drink the whisky with water almost tepid, and my horse being refreshed, I paid my fare and started.

I rode for three hours more, and was confident of having performed twice the distance named by mine host of the morning, and yet the prairie still extended as far as the eye could reach, and I could not perceive the city of Caledonia. Happily, I discovered a man at a distance riding towards me: we soon met.

"How far," said I, "to Caledonia city?"

"Eighteen miles," answered the traveller.

"Is there no farm on the way?" I rejoined, "for my horse is tired."

The horseman stared at me in amazement. "Why, Sir," he answered, "you turn your back to it; you have passed it eighteen miles behind."

"Impossible!" I exclaimed; "I never left the trail, except to water my horse at a little hut."

"Well," he answered, "that was at General Hiram Washington Tippet's; he keeps the post-office—why, Sir, that was Caledonia city."

I thanked him, unsaddled my horse, and bivouacked where I was, laughing heartily at my mistake in having asked for *ice*, when the two sides of the board made *post-office*.

But I must return to Boston and its court-house. As it was the time of the assizes, some fifty or sixty individuals had come from different quarters, either to witness the proceedings, or to swap their horses, their saddles, their bowie knife, or any thing; for it is while law is exercising its functions that a Texian is most anxious to swap, to cheat, to gamble, and to pick pockets and quarrel under its nose, just to shew his independence of all law.

The dinner bell rang a short time after our arrival, and for the first time in my life I found myself at an American *table-d'hôte*. I was astonished, as an Indian well might be. Before my companions and self had had time to

set down and make choice of any particular dish, all was disappearing like a dream. A general opposite to me took hold of a fowl, and, in the twinkling of an eye, severed the wings and legs. I thought it was polite of him to carve for others as well as himself, and was waiting for him to pass over the dish after he had helped himself, when, to my surprise, he retained all he had cut off, and pushed the carcase of the bird away from him. Before I had recovered from my astonishment, his plate was empty. Another seized a plate of cranberries, a fruit I was partial to, and I waited for him to help himself first and then pass the dish over to me; but he proved to be more greedy than the general, for, with an enormous horn spoon, he swallowed the whole.

The table was now deserted by all except by me and my companions, who, with doleful faces, endeavoured to appease our hunger with some stray potatoes. We called the landlord and asked him for something to eat; it was

with much difficulty that we could get half-a-dozen of eggs and as many slices of salt pork. This lesson was not thrown away upon me; and afterwards, when travelling in the States, I always helped myself before I was seated, caring nothing for my neighbours. Politeness at meals may be and is practised in Europe, or among the Indians, but among the Americans it would be attended with starvation.

After dinner, to kill time, we went to the court-house, and were fortunate enough to find room in a position where we could see and hear all that was going on.

The judge was seated upon a chair, the frame of which he was whittling with such earnestness that he appeared to have quite forgotten where he was. On each side of him were half-a-dozen of jurymen, squatted upon square blocks, which they were also whittling, judge and jurymen having each a cigar in the mouth, and a flask of liquor, with which now and then they regaled themselves. The attorney, on

his legs, addressing the jury, was also smoking, as well as the plaintiff, the defendant, and all the audience. The last were seated, horseback-fashion, upon parallel low benches, for their accommodation, twenty feet long, all turned towards the judge, and looking over the shoulders of the one in front of him, and busily employed in carving at the bench between his thigh and that of his neighbour. It was a very singular *coup-d'œil*, and a new-comer from Europe would have supposed the assembly to have been a "whittling club."

Having surveyed the company, I then paid attention to the case on trial, and, as I was just behind the defendant, I soon learned how justice was executed in Texas, or, at least, in Texian Boston. It appeared that the defendant was the postmaster and general merchant of the country. Two or three weeks back, the son of the plaintiff had entered his shop to purchase his provision of coffee, sugar, and flour, and had given him to change a good one-hun-

dred-dollar bill of one of the New Orleans banks. The merchant had returned to him a fifty-dollar note and another of ten. Two hours afterwards, the young man, having swapped his horse, carriole, and twenty dollars, for a waggon and two couple of oxen, presented the fifty-dollar note, which was refused as being counterfeited. The son of the plaintiff returned to the merchant, and requested him to give him a good note. The merchant, however, would not: "Why did you take it?" said he; "I be d—d if I give you any other money for it." Upon which the young man declared it was shameful swindling, and the merchant, throwing at him an iron weight of nine pounds, killed him on the spot.

The attorney, who was now pleading for the defendant, was trying to impress upon the jury that the murder had been merely accidental, inasmuch as the merchant had thrown the missile only in sport, just to scare away the fellow who was insulting him in his own

house; but, strange to say, no mention was made at all of the note, though every body knew perfectly well that the merchant had given it, and that it was a part of his trade to pass forged notes among his inexperienced customers. As soon as the lawyer had ended the defence, the merchant was called upon by the judge to give his own version of what occurred. He rose:

"Why," said he, "it was just so as has been said. I wished not to hurt the fellow; but he called me a swindler. Well, I knew the man was in a passion, and I did not care. I only said, 'How dare you, Sir?' and I threw the piece of iron just to frighten him. Well, to be sure, the blackguard fell down like a bull, and I thought it was a humbug. I laughed and said, 'None of your gammon;' but he was dead. I think the thing must have struck something on the way, and so swerved against his head. I wished not to kill the fellow—I be damned if I did."

The jurymen looked at each other with a significant and approving air, which could be translated as accidental death. Gabriel touched the merchant upon the shoulder, "You should have said to him, that you merely wished to kill a musquito upon the wall."

"Capital idea," cried the defendant. "I be d—d if it was not a musquito eating my molasses that I wished to kill, after all."

At that moment one of the jurymen approached the merchant, and addressed him in a low voice; I could not hear what passed, but I heard the parting words of the juryman, which were, "All's right!" To this dispenser of justice succeeded another; indeed, all the jurymen followed in succession, to have a little private conversation with the prisoner. At last the judge condescended to cease his whittling, and come to make his own bargain, which he did openly:

"Any good saddles, Fielding? mine looks rather shabby."

"Yes, by Jingo, a fine one, bound with blue cloth, and silver nails—Philadelphia-made—prime cost sixty dollars."

"That will do," answered the judge, walking back to his seat.

Ten minutes afterwards the verdict of manslaughter was returned against the defendant, who was considered, in a speech from the judge, sufficiently punished by the affliction which such an accident must produce to a generous mind. The court broke up, and Fielding, probably to shew how deep was his remorse, gave three cheers, to which the whole court answered with a hurrah, and the merchant was called upon to treat the whole company: of course he complied, and they all left the court-house. Gabriel and I remained behind. He had often tried to persuade me to abandon my ideas of going to the States and Europe, pointing out to me that I should be made a dupe and become a prey to pretended well-wishers. He had narrated to me many incidents of his

own life, of his folly and credulity, which had thrown him from an eminent station in civilized society, and had been the cause of our meeting in the Western World. He forewarned me that I should be disappointed in my expectations, and reap nothing but vexation and disappointment. He knew the world too well, I knew nothing of it, and I thought that he was moved by bitterness of spirit to rail so loud against it. He would fain persuade me to return with him to my own tribe of Shoshones, and not go in search of what I never should obtain. He was right, but I was obstinate. He did not let pass this opportunity of giving me a lesson.

"You have now witnessed," said he, "a sample of justice in this *soi-disant* civilized country. Two hundred dollars, perhaps, have cleared a murderer; ten millions would not have done it among the Shoshones."

"But Texas is not Europe," replied I.

"No," said Gabriel, "it is not; but in

Europe, as in Texas, with money you can do any thing, without money nothing."

At that moment we perceived a man wrapt in his blanket, and leaning against a tree.

He surveyed the group receding to the tavern, and the deepest feelings of hatred and revenge were working evidently within him. He saw us not, so intense were his thoughts. It was the plaintiff whose son had been murdered. Gabriel resumed.

"Now, mark that man; he was the plaintiff, the father of the young fellow so shamefully plundered and murdered; he is evidently a poor farmer, or the assassin would have been hung. He is now brooding over revenge: the law gave not justice, he will take it into his own hands, and he will probably have it to-night, or to-morrow. Injustice causes crime, and ninety-nine out of a hundred are forced into it by the impotency of the law; they suffer once, and afterwards act towards others as they have been acted by. That man

may have been till this day a good, industrious, and hospitable farmer; to-night he will be a murderer, in a week he will have joined the free bands, and will then revenge himself upon society at large, for the injustice he has received from a small portion of the community.

Till then I had never given credit to my friend for any great share of penetration, but he prophesied truly. Late in the night the father announced his intention of returning to his farm, and entered the general sleeping-room of the hotel to light a cigar. A glance informed him of all that he wished to know. Forty individuals were ranged sleeping in their blankets, alongside of the walls, which, as I have observed, were formed of pine logs, with a space of four or six inches between each: parallel with the wall, next to the yard, lay the murderer Fielding.

The father left the room, to saddle his horse. An hour afterwards the report of a rifle was

heard, succeeded by screams and cries of "Murder ! help ! murder !" Every one in the sleeping-room was up in a moment, lights were procured, and the judge was seen upon his knees with his hands upon his hinder quarters ; his neighbour Fielding was dead, and the same ball which had passed through his back and chest had blazed the bark off the nether parts of this pillar of Texian justice.

When the first surprise was over, pursuit of the assassin was resolved upon, and then it was discovered that, in his revenge, the father had not lost sight of prudence. All the horses were loose ; the stable and the court-house, as well as the bar and spirit store of the tavern, were in flames. While the Bostonians endeavoured to steal what they could, and the landlord was beating his negroes, the only parties upon whom he could vent his fury, our companions succeeded in recovering their horses, and at break of day, without any loss but the gold watch of the doctor, which

had probably been stolen from him during his sleep, we started for the last day's journey which we had to make in Texas.

As we rode away, nothing remained of Texian Boston except three patches of white ashes, and a few half-burnt logs, nor do I know if that important city has ever been rebuilt.

CHAPTER II.

We were now but twenty miles from the Red River, and yet this short distance proved to be the most difficult travelling we had experienced for a long while. We had to cross swamps, lagoons, and canebrakes, in which our horses were bogged continually; so that at noon, and after a ride of six hours, we had only gained twelve miles. We halted upon a dry knoll, and there, for the first time since the morning, we entered into conversation; for, till then, we had been too busy scrutinizing the ground before our horses' feet. I had a great deal to say both to Gabriel and to Roche; we were to part the next morning,

—they to return to the Comanches and the Shoshones, I to go on to the Mormons, and perhaps to Europe.

I could not laugh at the doctor's *bon mots*, for my heart was full; till then, I had never felt how long intercourse, and sharing the same privations and dangers, will attach men to each other; and the perspective of a long separation rendered me gloomier and gloomier, as the time we still had to pass together became shorter.

Our five American companions had altered their first intention of travelling with me through the Arkansas. They had heard on the way, that some new thriving cities had lately sprung up on the American side of the Red River; the doctor was already speculating upon the fevers and agues of the ensuing summer; the parson was continually dreaming of a neat little church and a buxom wife, and the three lawyers, of rich fees from the wealthy cotton planters. The next day, therefore, I

was to be alone, among a people less hospitable than the Indians, and among whom I had to perform a journey of a thousand miles on horseback, constantly on the outskirts of civilization, and consequently exposed to all the dangers of border travelling.

When we resumed our march through the swampy canebrake, Gabriel, Roche, and I kept a little behind our companions.

"Think twice, whilst it is yet time," said Gabriel to me, "and believe me, it is better to rule over your devoted and attached tribe of Shoshones than to indulge in dreams of establishing a western empire; and, even if you will absolutely make the attempt, why should we seek the help of white men? what can we expect from them and their assistance but exorbitant claims and undue interference? With a few months' regular organization, the Comanches, Apaches, and Shoshones can be made equal to any soldiers of the civilized world, and among them you will have no traitors."

I felt the truth of what he said, and for a quarter of an hour I remained silent: "Gabriel," replied I at last, "I have now gone too far to recede, and the plans which I have devised are not for my own advantage, but for the general welfare of the Shoshones and of all the friendly tribes. I hope to live to see them a great nation, and, at all events, it is worth a trial."

My friend shook his head mournfully; he was not convinced, but he knew the bent of my temper, and was well aware that all he could say would now be useless.

The natural buoyancy of our spirits would not, however, allow us to be grave long; and when the loud shouts of the doctor announced that he had caught a sight of the river, we spurred our horses, and soon rejoined our company. We had by this time issued from the swampy canebrakes, and were entering a lane between two rich cotton-fields, and at the

end of which flowed the Red River; not the beautiful, clear, and transparent stream running upon a rocky and sandy bed, as in the country inhabited by the Comanches and Pawnee Picts, and there termed the Colorado of the West; but a red and muddy, yet rapid stream. We agreed that we should not ferry the river that evening, but seek a farm, and have a feast before parting company. We learned from a negro, that we were in a place called Lost Prairie, and that ten minutes' ride down the bank of the stream would carry us to Captain Finn's plantation. We received this news with wild glee, for Finn was a celebrated character, one whose life was so full of strange adventures in the wilderness, that it would fill volumes with hairbreadth encounters and events of thrilling interest.

Captain Finn received us with a cordial welcome, for unbounded hospitality is the invariable characteristic of the older cotton planters.

A great traveller himself, he knew the necessities of a travelling life, and, before conducting us to the mansion, he guided us to the stables, where eight intelligent slaves, taking our horses, rubbed them down before our eyes, and gave them a plentiful supply of fodder and a bed of fresh straw.

"That will do till they are cool," said our kind host; "to-night they will have their grain and water; let us now go to the old woman and see what she can give us for supper."

A circumstance worthy of remark is, that, in the western states, a husband always calls his wife the old woman, and she calls him the old man, no matter how young the couple may be. I have often heard men of twenty-five sending their slaves upon some errand "to the old woman," who was not probably more than eighteen years old. A boy of ten years calls his parents in the same way. "How far to

Little Rock?" I once asked of a little urchin; "I don't know," answered he, "but the old ones will tell you." A few yards farther I met the "old ones;" they were both young people, not much more than twenty.

In Mrs. Finn we found a stout and plump farmer's wife, but she was a lady in her manners. Born in the wilderness, the daughter of one bold pioneer and married to another, she had never seen any thing but woods, canebrakes, cotton, and negroes, and yet, in her kindness and hospitality, she displayed a refinement of feeling and good breeding. She was daughter of the celebrated Daniel Boone, a name which has acquired a reputation even in Europe. She immediately ransacked her pantry, her hen-roost, and garden, and when we returned from the cotton-mill, to which our host, in his farmer's pride, had conducted us, we found, upon an immense table, a meal which would have satisfied fifty of those vora-

cious Bostonians whom we had met with the day before at the *table d'hôte*.

Well do I recollect her, as she stood before us on that glorious evening, her features beaming with pleasure, as she witnessed the rapidity with which we emptied our plates. How happy she would look when we praised her chickens, her honey, and her coffee; and then she would carve and cut, fill again our cups, and press upon us all the delicacies of the Far West borders, delicacies unknown in the old countries; such as fried beaver-tail, smoked tongue of the buffalo-calf, and (the *gourmand's* dish *par excellence*) the Louisiana gombo. Her coffee, too, was superb, as she was one of the few upon the continent of America who knew how to prepare it.

After our supper, the captain conducted us under the piazza attached to the building, where we found eight hammocks suspended, as white as snow. There our host disinterred

from a large bucket of ice several bottles of Madeira, which we sipped with great delight; the more so as, for our cane pipes and cheap Cavendish, Finn substituted a box of genuine Havanna cazadores. After our fatigues and starvation, it was more than comfortable —it was delightful. The doctor vowed he would become a planter, the parson asked if there were any widows in the neighbourhood, and the lawyers inquired if the planters of the vicinity were any way litigious. By the bye, I have observed that Captain Finn was a celebrated character. As we warmed with the *Madère frappé à glace*, we pressed him to relate some of his wild adventures, with which request he readily complied; for he loved to rehearse his former exploits, and it was not always that he could narrate them to so numerous an assembly. As the style he employed could only be understood by individuals who have rambled upon the borders of the Far

West, I will relate the little I remember in my own way, though I am conscious that the narrative must lose much when told by any one but Finn himself.

When quite an infant, he had been taken by the Indians and carried into the fastnesses of the West Virginian forests; there he had been brought up till he was sixteen years old, when, during an Indian war, he was recaptured by a party of white men. Who were his parents, he could never discover, and a kind Quaker took him into his house, gave him his name, and treated him as his own child, sending him first to school, and then to the Philadelphia college. The young man, however, was little fit for the restrictions of a university; he would often escape and wander for days in the forests, until hunger would bring him home again. At last, he returned to his adopted father, who was now satisfied that his thoughts were in the wilderness, and that, in the bustle of a large city and restraint of civi-

lized life, he would not live, but linger on till he drooped and died.

This discovery was a sad blow to the kind old man, who had fondly anticipated that the youngster would be a kind and grateful companion to him, when age should make him feel the want of friendship; but he was a just man, and reflecting that perhaps a short year of rambling would cure him, he was the first to propose it. Young Finn was grateful; beholding the tears of his venerable protector, he would have remained and attended him till the hour of his death; but the Quaker would not permit him, he gave him his best horse, and furnished him with arms and money. At that time, the fame of Daniel Boone had filled the Eastern States, and young Finn had read with avidity the adventures of that bold pioneer. Hearing that he was now on the western borders of Kentucky, making preparations for emigration farther west, into the very heart of the Indian country, he resolved to join

him and share the dangers of his expedition.

The life of Boone is too well known for me to describe this expedition. Suffice it to say, that, once in Missouri, Finn conceived and executed the idea of making alone a trip across the Rocky Mountains, to the very borders of the Pacific Ocean. Strange to say, he scarcely remembers any thing of that first trip, which lasted eleven months.

The animals had not yet been scared out of the wilderness; water was found twice every day; the vine grew luxuriantly in the forests, and the caravans of the white men had not yet destroyed the patches of plums and nuts which grew wild in the prairies.

Finn says he listened to the songs of the birds, and watched the sport of the deer, the buffaloes, and wild horses, in a sort of dreaming existence, fancying that he heard voices in the streams, in the foliage of the trees, in the caverns of the mountains; his wild imagi-

nation sometimes conjuring up strange and beautiful spirits of another world, who were his guardians, and who lulled him asleep every evening with music and perfumes.

I have related this pretty nearly in the very terms of our host, and many of his listeners have remarked, at different times, that when he was dwelling upon that particular portion of his life, he became gloomy and abstracted, as if still under the influence of former indelible impressions. Undoubtedly Captain Finn is of a strong poetical temperament, and any one on hearing him narrate would say the same; but it is supposed that, when the captain performed this first solitary excursion, his brain was affected by an excited and highly poetical imagination. After eleven months of solitude, he reached the Pacific Ocean, and awoke from his long illusion in the middle of a people whose language he could not understand; yet they were men of his colour, kind and hospitable; they gave him jewels and gold, and sent

him back east of the mountains, under the protection of some simple and mild-hearted savages. The spot where Finn had arrived was at one of the missions, and those who released him and sent him back were the good monks of one of the settlements in Upper California.

When Finn returned to the Mississippi, his narrative was so much blended with strange and marvellous stories, that it was not credited; but when he shewed and produced his stock of gold dust in bladders, and some precious stones, fifty different proposals were made to him to guide a band of greedy adventurers to the new western Eldorado. Finn, like Boone, could not bear the society of his own countrymen; he dreaded to hear the noise of their axes felling the beautiful trees; he feared still more to introduce them, like so many hungry wolves, among the good people who knew so well the sacred rites of hospitality.

After a short residence with the old backwoodsman, Finn returned to Virginia, just in time to close the eyes of the kind old Quaker. He found that his old friend had expected his return, for he had sold all his property, and deposited the amount in the hands of a safe banker, to be kept for Finn's benefit. The young wanderer was amazed; he had now ten thousand dollars, but what could he do with so much money? He thought of a home, of love and happiness, of the daughter of old Boone, and he started off to present her with his newly-acquired wealth. Finn entered Boone's cottage, with his bags and pocket-books in each hand, and casting his burden into a corner, he entered at once upon the matter.

"Why, I say, old man, I am sure I love the gal."

"She is a comely and kind girl," said the father.

"I wish she could love me."

"She does."

"Does she? well, I tell you what, Boone, give her to me, I'll try to make her happy."

"I will, but not yet," said the venerable patriarch. "Why, you are both of you mere children; she can't get a house, and how could you support her?"

Finn jumped up with pride and glee. "Look," said he, while he scattered on the floor his bank-notes, his gold, and silver, "that will support her bravely; tell me, old father, that will keep her snug, won't it?"

The pioneer nodded his head. "Finn," answered he, "you are a good young man, and I like you; you think like me; you love Polly, and Polly loves you; mind, you shall have her, when you are both old enough; but remember, my son, neither your pieces of money nor your rags of paper will ever keep a daughter of mine. No, no! you shall have Polly, but you must first know how to use the rifle and the axe."

A short time after this interview, Finn

started upon another trip to unknown lands, leaving old Boone to make the most he could of his money. Now, the old pioneer, although a bold hunter and an intrepid warrior, was a mere child in matters of interest, and in less than two months he had lost the whole deposit, the only "gentleman" he ever trusted having suddenly disappeared with the funds. In the meanwhile Finn had gone down the Mississippi, to the thirty-second degree of north latitude, when, entering the western swamps, where no white man had ever penetrated, he forced his way to the Red River, which he reached a little above the old French establishment of Nachitoches. Beyond this point, inland navigation had never been attempted, and Finn, procuring a light dug-out, started alone, with his arms and his blanket, upon his voyage of discovery. During four months he struggled daily against the rapid stream, till he at last reached, in spite of rafts and dangerous eddies, its source at the Rocky Mountains.

On his return, a singular and terrible adventure befel him ; he was dragging his canoe over a raft, exactly opposite to where now stands his plantation, when, happening to hurt his foot, he lost hold of his canoe. It was on the very edge of the raft, near a ruffled eddy; the frail bark was swamped in a moment, and with it Finn lost his rifle, all his arms, and his blanket.*

Now that cotton grown on the Red River has been acknowledged to be the best in the States, speculators have settled upon both sides of it as far as two hundred miles above Lost Prairie ; but at the time that Finn made his excursion, the country was a wilderness of horrible morasses, where the alligators basked unmolested. For months Finn found himself a prisoner at Lost Prairie, the spot being sur-

* Rafts are an assemblage of forest trees, which have been washed down into the river, from the undermining of its banks. At certain points they become interlaced and stationary, stretching right across the river, preventing the passage of even a canoe.

rounded with impenetrable swamps, where the lightest foot would have sunk many fathoms below the surface. As to crossing the river, it was out of the question, as it was more than half a mile broad, and Finn was no swimmer; even now, no human being or animal can cross it at this particular spot, for so powerful are the eddies, that, unless a pilot is well acquainted with the passage, a boat will be capsized in the whirlpools. Human life can be sustained upon very little, for Finn managed to live for months upon a marshy ground, six miles in extent, partially covered with prickly pears, sour grapes, and mushrooms. Birds he would occasionally kill with sticks; several times he surprised tortoises coming on shore to deposit their eggs, and once, when much pressed by hunger, he gave battle to a huge alligator. Fire he had none; his clothes had long been in rags; his beard had grown to a great length, and his nails were sharp as the claws of a wild beast. At last there was a flood in the river,

and above the raft Finn perceived two immense pine trees afloat in the middle of the stream. Impelled by the force of the current, they cut through the raft, where the timber was rotten, and then grounded.

This was a chance which Finn lost no time in profiting by; out of the fibrous substance of the prickly pear, he soon manufactured sufficient rope to lash the two trees together, with great labour got them afloat, and was carried down the stream with the speed of an arrow. He succeeded in landing many miles below, on the eastern bank, but he was so bruised, that for many days he was unable to move.

One day a report was spread in the neighbourhood of Port Gibson, that a strange monster, of the ourang-outang species, had penetrated the canebrakes upon the western banks of the Mississippi. Some negroes declared to have seen him tearing down a brown bear; an Arkansas hunter had sent to Philadelphia

an exaggerated account of this recently discovered animal, and the members of the academies had written to him to catch the animal, if possible, alive, no matter at what expense. A hunting expedition was consequently formed, hundreds of dogs were let loose in the canebrakes, and the chase began.

The hunters were assembled, waiting till the strange animal should break cover, when suddenly he burst upon them, covered with blood and followed closely by ten or fifteen hounds. He was armed with a heavy club, with which he now and then turned upon the dogs, crushing them at a blow. The hunters were dumb with astonishment; mounting their horses, they sprang forward to witness the conflict; the brute, on seeing them, gave a loud shout; one of the hunters being terrified, fired at him with his rifle; the strange animal put one of his hairy paws upon its breast, staggered, and fell; a voice was heard: "The Lord forgive you this murder!"

On coming near, the hunters found that their victim was a man, covered with hair from head to foot; he was senseless, but not dead. They deplored their fatal error, and resolved that no expense or attention should be spared upon the unfortunate sufferer. This hunted beast, this hairy man, was Finn. The wound, not being mortal, was soon cured; but he became crazy, and did not recover his reason for eight months. He related his adventures up to his quitting the Lost Prairie; after which all was a blank. His narrative soon spread all over the States, and land speculators crowded from every part to hear Finn's description of the unknown countries. The government became anxious to establish new settlements in these countries, and Finn was induced to commence the work of colonization by the gift of the "Lost Prairie." Money was also supplied to him, that he might purchase slaves; but, before taking possession of his grant, he went to Missouri to visit his

old friend and claim his bride. Her father had been dead for some time, but the daughter was constant.

With his wife, his brother-in-law, his negroes, and several waggons loaded with the most necessary articles, Finn forced his way to Little Rock, on the Arkansas river, whence, after a short repose, he again started in a S. S. W. direction, through a hilly and woody country never before travelled. At last he reached the "Lost Prairie;" nothing was heard of him for two years, when he appeared at Nachitoches in a long *cow*,* laden with produce.

From Nachitoches Finn proceeded to New Orleans, where the money received for his cotton, furs, and honey enabled him to purchase two more negroes and a fresh supply of husbandry tools. A company was immediately

* A cow is a kind of floating raft peculiar to the western rivers of America, being composed of immense pine trees tied together, and upon which a log cabin is erected.

formed, for the purpose of exploring the Red River, as far as it might prove navigable, and surveying the lands susceptible of cultivation. A small steam-boat was procured, and its command offered to Finn, who thus became a captain. Although the boat could not proceed higher than Lost Prairie, the result of the survey induced hundreds of planters to settle upon the banks of the river, and Captain Finn lived to become rich and honoured by his countrymen; his great spirit of enterprise never deserted him, and it was he who first proposed to the government to cut through the great rafts which impeded the navigation. His plans were followed, and exploring steam-boats have since gone nearly a thousand miles above Captain Finn's plantation at Lost Prairie.

CHAPTER III.

The next morning our American companions bade us farewell, and resumed their journey; but Captain Finn insisted that Gabriel, Roche, and I should not leave him so soon. He pointed out that my steed would not be able to travel much farther, if I did not give him at least two or three days' repose; as for the horses of my two companions, they had become quite useless, and our host charged himself with procuring them others, which would carry them back to the Comanches.

Captain Finn's hospitality was not, however, so heavily taxed, for during the day a flotilla of fifteen canoes stopped before the plantation,

and a dozen of French traders came up to the house. They were intimate friends of the captain, who had known them for a long time, and it fortunately happened that they were proceeding with goods to purchase the furs of the Pawnee Picts. They offered a passage to Gabriel and Roche, who, of course, accepted the welcome proposition. They embarked their saddles, with sundry provisions, which the good Mrs. Finn forced upon them, while her hospitable husband, unknown to them, put into the canoes a bale of such articles as he thought would be useful to them during their long journey. The gift, as I afterwards learned, was composed of pistols and holsters, a small keg of powder, bars of lead, new bits and stirrups, and of four Mackinaw blankets.

At last the moment arrived when I was to part with my friends. I felt a bitter pang, and I wept when I found myself alone. However, I consoled myself with the reflection that our separation was not to be a long one, and,

cheered up by the captain, I soon overcame the bitterness of the separation. Yet, for months afterwards, I felt lonely and tired of myself; I had never had an idea how painful it is to part from the only few individuals who are attached to you. My worthy host shewed much interest in my welfare. As he had some business to transact at the Land Office in the Arkansas, he resolved that he would accompany me two or three days on my journey. Five days after the departure of Gabriel and Roche, we crossed the Red River, and soon arrived at Washington, the only place of any importance in the west of Arkansas.

From Washington to Little Rock, the capital of the state, there is a mail-road, with farms at every fifteen or twenty miles; but the captain informed me they were inhabited by the refuse from other states, and that west of the Mississippi (except in Louisiana and Missouri) it was always safer to travel through the wilderness, and camp out. We accordingly took the

back-wood trail, across a hilly and romantic country, entirely mineral, and full of extinct volcanoes. The quantity of game found in these parts is incredible; every ten minutes we would start a band of some twenty turkeys. At all times, deer were seen grazing within rifle-shot, and I don't think that, on our first day's journey over the hills, we met less than twenty bears.

Independent of his love for the wilderness and his hatred of bowie-knife men, Captain Finn had another reason for not following the mail-road. He had business to transact at the celebrated hot springs, and he had to call on the way upon one of his brothers-in-law, a son of Boone, and a mighty hunter, who had settled in the very heart of the mountains, and who made it a rule to take a trip every spring to the Rocky Mountains. The second day, at noon, after a toilsome ascent of a few thousand feet, we arrived at a small clearing on the top of the mountains, where the barking

of the dogs and the crowing of the fowls announced the vicinity of a habitation, and, ere many minutes elapsed, we heard the sharp report of a rifle.

"Young Boone's own, I declare," exclaimed Finn; "'twas I that gave him the tool. I should know its crack amidst a thousand. Now mark me, chief, Boone never misses; he has killed a deer or a bear; if the first, search for a hole between the fifth and sixth rib; if a bear, look in the eye. At all events, the young chap is a capital cook, and we arrive in good time. Did I not say so? By all the alligators in the swamps! Eh, Boone, my boy, how fares it with ye?"

We had by this time arrived at the spot where the buck lay dead, and near the body was standing the gaunt form of a man, about forty years old, dressed in tanned leather, and standing six feet nine in his mocassins. Though we were within a yard of him, he reloaded his rifle with imperturbable gravity, and it was

only when he had finished that job, that I could perceive his grim features beaming with a smile.

"Welcome, old boy; welcome, stranger; twice welcome to the hunter's home. I knew somebody was coming, because I saw the pigeons were flying up from the valley below; and as dried venison won't do after a morning trip, why, I took the rifle to kill a beast out of my *flock*." The hunter grinned at his conceit. "You see," he continued, "this place of mine is a genuine spot for a hunter. Every morning, from my threshold, I can shoot a deer, a bear, or a turkey. I can't abide living in a country where an honest man must toil a whole day for a mouthful of meat; it would never do for me. Down Blackey, down Judith, down dogs. Old boy, take the scalping-knife and skin the beast under the red oak."

This second part of the sentence was addressed to a young lad of sixteen, an inmate of the hunter's cabin; and the dogs, having come

to the conclusion that we were not robbers, allowed us to dismount our horses. The cabin was certainly the *ne plus ultra* of simplicity, and yet it was comfortable. Four square logs supported a board—it was the table; many more were used as *fauteuils;* and buffalo and bear hides, rolled in a corner of the room, were the bedding. A stone jug, two tin cups, and a large boiler completed the furniture of the cabin. There was no chimney; all the cooking was done outside. In due time we feasted upon the hunter's spoil, and, by way of passing the time, Boone related to us his first grizzly bear expedition.

While a very young man, he had gone to the great mountains of the West with a party of trappers. His great strength and dexterity in handling the axe, and the deadly precision of his aim with the rifle, had given him a reputation among his companions, and yet they were always talking to him as if he were a boy, because he had not yet followed the Red-skins

on the war-path, nor fought a grizzly bear, which deed is considered quite as honourable and more perilous.

Young Boone waited patiently for an opportunity, when one day he witnessed a terrible conflict, in which one of these huge monsters, although wounded by twenty balls, was so closely pursuing the trappers, his companions, that they were compelled to seek their safety by plunging into the very middle of a broad river. There, fortunately, the strength of the animal failed, and the stream rolled him away. It had been a terrible fight, and for many days the young man would shudder at the recollection; but he could no longer bear the taunts which were bestowed upon him, and, without announcing his intention to his companions, he resolved to leave them and bring back with him the claws of a grizzly bear, or die in the attempt. For two days he watched in the passes of the mountains, till he discovered, behind some bushes, the mouth of a dark cave, under a mass

of rocks. The stench which proceeded from it and the marks at the entrance were sufficient to point out to the hunter that it contained the object of his search; but, as the sun had set, he reflected that the beast was to a certainty awake, and most probably out in search of prey. Boone climbed up a tree, from which he could watch the entrance of the cave; having secured himself and his rifle against a fall, by thongs of leather, with which a hunter is always provided, fatigue overpowered him, and he slept.

At morn he was awakened by a growl and a rustling noise below; it was the bear dragging to his abode the carcase of a buck. When he thought that the animal was glutted with flesh, and sleeping, Boone descended the tree, and, leaning his rifle against the rock, he crawled into the cave to reconnoitre. It must have been a terrible moment; but he had made up his mind, and he possessed all the courage of his father: the cave was spacious and dark.

The heavy grunt of the animal shewed that he was asleep.

By degrees, the vision of Boone became more clear, and he perceived the shaggy mass at about ten feet from him and about twenty yards from the entrance of the cave. The ground under him yielded to his weight, for it was deeply covered with the bones of animals, and more than once he thought himself lost, when rats, snakes, and other reptiles, disturbed by him from their meal, would start away, in every direction, with loud hissing and other noises. The brute, however, never awoke, and Boone, having finished his survey, crawled out from this horrid den to prepare for the attack.

He first cut a piece of pitch-pine, six or seven feet long, then, taking from his pouch a small cake of bees'-wax, he wrapped it round one end of the stick, giving it at the extremity the shape of a small cup, to hold some whisky. This done, he re-entered the cavern, turned to

his left, fixed his new kind of flambeau upright against the wall, poured the liquor in the wax cup, and then went out again to procure fire. With the remainder of his wax and a piece of cotton twine, he made a small taper, which he lighted, and crawled in again over the bones, shading his light with one hand till he had applied the flame to the whisky. The liquor was above proof, and as Boone returned and took his position nearer the entrance, with his rifle, it threw up a vivid flame, which soon ignited the wax and the pitch-pine itself.

The bear required something more than light to awake him from his almost lethargic sleep, and Boone threw bone after bone at him, till the brute woke up, growled with astonishment at the unusual sight before him, and advanced lazily to examine it. The young man had caught up his rifle by the barrel; he took a long and steady aim, as he knew that he must die if the bear was only wounded; and as the angry animal raised his paw to strike down the

obnoxious torch, he fired. There was a heavy fall, a groan, and a struggle,—the light was extinguished, and all was dark as before. The next morning Boone rejoined his companions as they were taking their morning meal, and, throwing at their feet his bleeding trophies, he said to them, "Now, who will dare to say that I am not a man?"

The history of this bold deed spread in a short time to even the remotest tribes of the North, and when, years afterwards, Boone fell a prisoner to the Black-feet Indians, they restored him to liberty and loaded him with presents, saying, that they could not hurt the great brave who had vanquished in his own den the evil spirit of the mountains.

At another time, Boone, when hardly pressed by a party of the Flat-head Indians, fell into a crevice and broke the butt of his rifle. He was safe, however, from immediate danger; at least, he thought so, and resolved he would remain where he was till his pursuers

should abandon their search. On examining the place which had afforded him so opportune a refuge, he perceived it was a spacious natural cave, having no other entrance than the hole or aperture through which he had fallen. He thanked Providence for this fortunate discovery, as, for the future, he would have a safe place to conceal his skins and provisions while trapping; but as he was prosecuting his search, he perceived with dismay that the cave was already inhabited.

In a corner he perceived two jaguars, which followed his movements with glaring eyes. A single glance satisfied him they were cubs; but a maddening thought shot across his brain: the mother was out, probably not far; she might return in a moment, and he had no arms, except his knife and the barrel of his broken rifle. While musing upon his perilous situation, he heard a roar, which summoned all his energy; he rolled a loose mass of rock to the entrance; made it as firm as he could, by

backing it with other stones; tied his knife to the end of his rifle barrel, and calmly waited for the issue. A minute passed, when a tremendous jaguar dashed against the rock, and Boone needed all his giant's strength to prevent it from giving way.

Perceiving that main force could not clear the passage, the animal began scratching and digging at the entrance, and its hideous roars were soon responded to by the cubs, which threw themselves upon Boone. He kicked them away, but not without receiving several ugly scratches, and, thrusting the blade of his knife through the opening between the large stone and the solid rock, he broke it in the shoulder of the female jaguar, which, with a yell, started away. This respite was fortunate, as by this time Boone's strength was exhausted; he profited by the suspension of hostility, so as to increase the impediments, in case of a new attack; and reflecting that the mewings of the cubs attracted and enraged the

mother, he knocked their brains out with the barrel of his rifle. During two hours, he was left to repose himself after his exertions, and he was beginning to think the animal had been scared away, when another terrible bound against the massive stone forced it a few inches into the cave. For an hour he struggled, till the jaguar, itself tired, and not hearing the mewings of her cubs, retired with a piteous howl.

Night came, and Boone began to despond. Leaving the cave was out of question, for the brute was undoubtedly watching for him; and yet remaining was almost as dangerous, as long watching and continual exertion weighed down his eyelids and rendered sleep imperative. He decided to remain where he was, and after another hour of labour in fortifying the entrance, he lay down to sleep, with the barrel of his rifle close to him, in case of attack.

He had slept about three or four hours,

when he was awakened by a noise close to his head. The moon was shining, and shot her beams through the crevices at the mouth of the cave. A foreboding of danger would not allow Boone to sleep any more; he was watching with intense anxiety, when he observed several of the smaller stones he had placed round the piece of rock rolling towards him, and that the rays of light streaming into the cave were occasionally darkened by some interposed body. It was the jaguar, which had been undermining the rock: one after the other, the stones gave way; Boone rose, grasped his heavy rifle barrel, and determined to await the attack of the animal.

In a second or two, the heavy stone rolled a few feet into the cave; the jaguar advanced her head, then her shoulders, and at last, a noiseless bound brought her within four feet of Boone, who at that critical moment collecting all his strength for a decisive blow, dashed her skull to atoms. Boone, quite exhausted,

drank some of her blood to allay his thirst, pillowed his head upon her body, and fell into a deep sleep.

The next morning Boone, after having made a good meal off one of the cubs, started to rejoin his companions, and communicated to them his adventure and discovery. A short time afterwards, the cave was stored with all the articles necessary to a trapper's life, and soon became the rendezvous of all the adventurous men from the banks of the river Platte to the shores of the Great Salt Lake.

Since Boone had settled in his present abode, he had had a hand-to-hand fight with a black bear, in the very room where we were sitting. When he had built his log cabin, it was with the intention of taking to himself a wife. At that time he courted the daughter of one of the old Arkansas settlers, and he wished to have "a place and a crop on foot" before he married. The girl was killed by the fall of a tree, and Boone, in his sorrow, sent away

the men whom he had hired to help him in "turning his field," for he wished to be alone.

Months elapsed, and his crop of corn promised an abundant harvest; but he cared not. He would take his rifle and remain sometimes for a month in the woods, brooding over his loss. The season was far advanced, when, one day, returning home, he perceived that the bears, the squirrels, and the deer had made rather free with the golden ears of his corn. The remainder he resolved to save for the use of his horse, and as he wished to begin harvest next morning, he slept that night in the cabin, on his solitary pallet. The heat was intense, and, as usual in these countries during summer, he had left his door wide open.

It was about midnight, when he heard something tumbling in the room; he rose in a moment, and, hearing a short and heavy breathing, he asked who it was, for the darkness was such, that he could not see two yards before him. No answer being given, except a

kind of half-smothered grunt, he advanced, and, putting out his hand, he seized the shaggy coat of a bear. Surprise rendered him motionless, and the animal giving him a blow in the chest with his terrible paw, threw him down outside the door. Boone could have escaped, but, maddened with the pain of his fall, he only thought of vengeance, and, seizing his knife and tomahawk, which were fortunately within his reach, he darted furiously at the beast, dealing blows at random. Great as was his strength, his tomahawk could not penetrate through the thick coat of the animal, which, having encircled the body of his assailant with his paws, was pressing him in one of those deadly embraces which could only have been resisted by a giant like Boone. Fortunately, the black bear, unlike the grizzly, very seldom uses his claws and teeth in fighting, contenting himself with smothering his victim. Boone disentangled his left arm, and with his knife dealt a furious blow upon the snout of the

animal, which, smarting with pain, released his hold. The snout is the only vulnerable part in an old black bear. Even at forty yards, the ball of a rifle will flatten against his skull, and if in any other part of the body, it will scarcely produce any serious effect.

Boone, aware of this, and not daring to risk another hug, darted away from the cabin. The bear, now quite angry, followed and overtook him near the fence. Fortunately the clouds were clearing away, and the moon threw light sufficient to enable the hunter to strike with a more certain aim: chance also favoured him; he found on the ground one of the rails made of the blue ash, very heavy, and ten feet in length; he dropped his knife and tomahawk, and seizing the rail, he renewed the fight with caution, for it had now become a struggle for life or death.

Had it been a bull or a panther, they would have had their bones shivered to pieces by the tremendous blows which Boone dealt upon his

adversary with all the strength of despair; but Bruin is by nature an admirable fencer, and, in spite of his unwieldy shape, there is not in the world an animal whose motions are more rapid in a close encounter. Once or twice he was knocked down by the force of the blows, but generally he would parry them with a wonderful agility. At last, he succeeded in seizing the other end of the rail, and dragged it towards him with irresistible force. Both man and beast fell, Boone rolling to the place where he had dropped his arms, while the bear advanced upon him; the moment was a critical one, but Boone was accustomed to look at and brave death under every shape, and with a steady hand he buried his tomahawk in the snout of his enemy, and, turning round, he rushed to his cabin, believing he would have time to secure the door. He closed the latch, and applied his shoulders to it; but it was of no avail, the terrible brute dashed in head foremost, and tumbled in the room with Boone

and the fragments of the door. The two foes rose and stared at each other; Boone had nothing left but his knife, but Bruin was tottering and unsteady, and Boone felt that the match was more equal: once more they closed.

A few hours after sunrise, Captain Finn, returning home from the legislature at Little Rock, called upon his friend, and, to his horror, found him apparently lifeless on the floor, and alongside of him, the body of the bear. Boone soon recovered, and found that the lucky blow which had saved him from being crushed to death had buried the whole blade of his knife, through the left eye, in the very brain of the animal.*

* The black bear does not grow to any great size in the eastern and northern parts of America, but in Arkansas and the adjacent states it becomes, from its size and strength, almost as formidable an antagonist as a grizzly bear. It is very common to find them eight hundred-weight, but sometimes they weigh above a thousand pounds.

CHAPTER IV.

The next morning, we all three started, and by noon we had crossed the Washita River. It is the most beautiful stream I know of, being cool and transparent, averaging a depth of eight or ten feet, and running upon a hard sandy bottom. While we were crossing, Boone told us that as soon as we arrived at the summit of the woody hills before us, if we looked sharp, we should see some bears, for he had never passed that way without shooting one or two.

We forded the stream, and entered into a noble forest of maple trees, the ground now rising in gentle swells for several miles, when

the fir-pines, succeeding to the maple, told us that we had reached the highest point of the hills. Hearing some trampling and rustling at a distance, I spurred my horse, to take the lead and have the first chance of a shot, when I perceived to my left, not twenty yards from me and in a small patch of briars, a large she-bear playing with her cub. I was just raising my rifle to fire, when Boone's voice called me back, and I perceived that he and Finn had just dismounted and entered a thicket. Knowing that they must have an object in view, I joined them, and asked what was the matter.

"Rare sport," answered Finn, extending his hand towards a precipitous and rocky part of the mountain.

It was sport, and of a very singular description.

A large deer was running at full speed, closely pursued by a puma. The chase had already been a long one, for as they came nearer and nearer, I could perceive both their

long parched tongues hanging out of their mouths, and their bounding, though powerful, was no longer so elastic as usual. The deer, having now arrived within two hundred yards of the bear, stopped a moment to sniff the air; then coming still nearer, he made a bound, with his head extended, to ascertain if Bruin was still near him. As the puma was closing with him, the deer wheeled sharp round, and turning back almost upon his own trail, passed within thirty yards of his pursuer, who, not being able at once to stop his career, gave an angry growl and followed the deer again, but at a distance of some hundred yards; hearing the growl, Bruin drew his body half out of the briars, remaining quietly on the look-out.

"Gone," I exclaimed.

"Wait a bit," answered Boone; "here he comes again."

He was right; the deer again appeared, coming towards us, but his speed was much reduced, and as he approached us, it was evi-

dent that the animal was calculating his distance with admirable precision. The puma, now expecting to seize his prey, followed about thirty yards behind; the bear, aware of the close vicinity of her enemy, cleared the briars and squared herself for action, when the deer, with a beautiful and powerful spring, passed the bear's head and disappeared. At the moment he took the leap, the puma was close upon him, and was just balancing himself for a spring, when he perceived, to his astonishment, that now he was faced by a formidable adversary, not the least disposed to fly. He crouched, lashing his flanks with his long tail, while the bear, about five yards from him, remained like a statue, looking at the puma with his little glaring eyes.

One minute they remained thus; the puma its sides heaving with exertion, agitated, and apparently undecided; the bear, perfectly calm and motionless. Gradually the puma crawled backwards, till at a right distance for a spring,

when, throwing all its weight upon its hind parts, to increase its power, it darted upon the bear like lightning, and fixed its claws into her back. The bear, with irresistible force, seized the puma with her two fore-paws, pressing it with all the weight of her body and rolling over it. We heard a heavy grunt, a plaintive howl, a crashing of bones, and the puma was dead. The cub of the bear came to ascertain what was going on, and after a few minutes' examination of the victim, it strutted down the slope of the hill, followed by its mother, which was apparently unhurt. We did not attempt to prevent their retreat, for among real hunters in the wilds, there is a feeling which restrains them from attacking an animal which has just undergone a deadly strife. This is a very common practice of the deer, when chased by a puma—that of leading him to the haunt of a bear; I have often witnessed it, although I never before knew the deer to turn, as it did in this instance.

This incident reminds me of another, which was witnessed by Gabriel, a short time before the murder of the Prince Seravalle. Gabriel had left his companions, to look after game, and he soon came upon the track of a wild boar, which led to a grove of tall persimon trees; then, for the first time, he perceived that he had left his pouch and powder-horn in the camp; but he cared little about it, as he knew that his aim was certain. When within sixty yards of the grove, he spied the boar at the foot of one of the outside trees: the animal was eating the fruit which had fallen. Gabriel raised his eyes to the thick-leaved branches of the tree, and perceived that there was a large black bear in the tree, also regaling himself with the fruit. Gabriel approached to within thirty yards, and was quite absorbed with the novelty of the sight.

At every movement of Bruin, hundreds of persimons would fall down, and these, of course, were the ripest. This the bear knew.

very well, and it was with no small jealousy that he witnessed the boar below making so luxurious a meal at his expense, while he could only pick the green fruit, and that with difficulty, as he dared not trust his body too far upon the smaller limbs of the tree. Now and then he would growl fiercely, and put his head down, and the boar would look at him with a pleased and grateful motion of the head, answering the growl by a grunt, just as to say, "Thank you; very polite to eat the green ones and send me the others." This Bruin understood, and he could bear it no longer; he began to shake the tree violently, till the red persimons fell like a shower around the boar; then there was a duet of growls and grunts—angry and terrific from the bear above, denoting satisfaction and pleasure on the part of the boar below.

Gabriel had come in pursuit of the boar, but now he changed his mind, for, considering the present angry mood of Bruin, he was cer-

tain to be attacked by him if discovered. As to going away, it was a thing he would not think of, as long as his rifle was loaded; so he waited and watched, until the bear should give him an opportunity of aiming at a vital part. This he waited for in vain, and, on reflection, he determined to wound the bear; for, knowing the humour of the animal, he felt almost positive it would produce a conflict between him and the boar, which the bear would attack in his wrath. He fired: the bear was evidently wounded, although but slightly, and he began roaring and scratching his neck in a most furious manner, and looking vindictively at the boar, which, at the report of the rifle, had merely raised his head for a moment, and then resumed his meal. Bruin was certainly persuaded that the wound he had received had been inflicted by the beast below. He made up his mind to punish him, and, to spare the trouble and time of descending, dropped from the tree, and rushed upon the boar, which met

him at once, and, notwithstanding Bruin's great strength, he proved to him that a ten years' old wild boar, with seven-inch tusks, was a very formidable antagonist. Bruin soon felt the tusks of the boar ripping him up; ten or twelve streams of blood were rushing from his sides, yet he did not give way; on the contrary, he grew fiercer and fiercer, and at last the boar was almost smothered under the huge paws of his adversary. The struggle lasted a few minutes more, the grunting and growling becoming fainter and fainter, till both combatants lay motionless. They were dead when Gabriel came up to them; the bear horribly mangled, and the boar with every bone of his body broken. Gabriel filled his hat with the persimons which were the cause of this tragedy, and returned to the camp for help and ammunition.

Finn, Boone, and I resumed our journey, and after a smart ride of two hours we entered upon a beautiful spot, called "Magnet Cove."

This is one of the great curiosities of the Arkansas, and there are few planters who do not visit it at least once in their lives, even if they have to travel a distance of one hundred miles.

It is a small valley surrounded by rocky hills, one or two hundred feet high, and forming a belt, in the shape of a horse-shoe. From these rocks flow hundreds of sulphuric springs, some boiling and some cold, all pouring into large basins, which their waters have dug out during their constant flow of so many centuries. These mineral springs are so very numerous in this part of the country, that they would scarcely be worth mentioning, were it not that in this valley, for more than a mile in circumference, the stones and rocks, which are of a dull black colour and very heavy, are all magnetic.

It is a custom for every visitor to bring with him some pieces of iron, to throw against the rocks: the appearance is very strange; old

horse-shoes, forks, knives, bars of iron, nails, and barrels of pistols, are hanging from the projecting stones, the nails standing upright, as if they were growing. These pieces of iron have themselves become very powerfully magnetic. I picked up a horse-shoe, which I afterwards found lifted a bar of steel of two pounds weight.

Half a mile from this singular spot dwelt another old pioneer, a friend of my companions, and at his cabin we stopped to pass the night. Our host was only remarkable for his great hospitality and greater taciturnity; he had always lived in the wilds, quite alone, and the only few words he would utter were incoherent. It appeared as if his mind was fixed upon scenes of the past. In his early life he had been one of the companions of the celebrated pirate La Fitte, and after the defence of New Orleans, in which the pirates played no inconsiderable part (they had the management of the artillery), he accepted the free pardon of

the president, and forcing his way through the forests and swamps of Louisiana, was never heard of for five or six years. Subsequently, circumstances brought about an intimacy between him and my two companions, but, contrary to the habits of pioneers and trappers, he never reverted to his former adventures, but always evaded the subject.

There were mysterious rumours afloat about treasure which had been buried by the pirates in Texas, known only to him ; a thing not improbable, as the creeks, lagoons, and bays of that country had always been a favourite resort of these freebooters; but nothing had ever been extracted from him relative to the question. He was now living with an Indian woman of the Flat-head tribe, by whom he had several children, and this was also a subject upon which the western farmers had much to say.

Had the squaw been a Creek, a Cherokee, or an Osage woman, it would have created no

surprise ; but how came he in possession of a woman belonging to so distant a tribe ? Moreover, the squaw looked so proud, so imperious, so queenly ; there was a mystery, which every one was anxious, but unable to solve.

We left our host early in the morning, and arrived at noon at the hot springs, where I was to part company with my entertaining companions.

I was, however, persuaded to remain till the next morning, as Finn wished to give me a letter for a friend of his in South Missouri. Of the hot springs of the Arkansas, I can give no better description, than by quoting the following lines from a Little Rock newspaper :—

" The warm springs are among the most interesting curiosities of our country : they are in great numbers. One of them, the central one, emits a vast quantity of water ; the ordinary temperature is that of boiling water. When the season is dry, and the volume of

water somewhat diminished, the temperature of the water increases.

"The waters are remarkably limpid and pure, and are used by the people who resort there for health, for culinary purposes. They have been analyzed, and exhibit no mineral properties beyond common spring water. Their efficacy, then, for they are undoubtedly efficacious to many invalids that resort there, results from the shades of the adjacent mountains, and from the cool and oxygenated mountain breeze; the convenience of warm and tepid bathing; the novelty of fresh and mountain scenery, and the necessity of temperance, imposed by the poverty of the country and the difficulty of procuring supplies. The cases in which the waters are supposed to be efficacious, are those of rheumatic affection, general debility, dyspepsia, and cutaneous complaints. At a few yards from the hot springs is one strongly sulphuric and remarkable for its coldness. In the wild and mountain scenery of this lonely region,

there is much of grandeur and novelty to fix the curiosity of the lover of nature."

The next morning I bade farewell to Finn and Boone, and set off on my journey. I could not help feeling a strange sensation of loneliness, as I passed hill after hill, and wood after wood. It seemed to me as if something was wrong ; I talked to myself, and often looked behind to see if any one was coming my way. This feeling, however, did not last long, and I soon learned that, west of the Mississippi, a man with a purse and a good horse must never travel in the company of strangers, without he is desirous to lose them and his life to boot.

I rode without stopping the forty-five miles of dreary road which leads from the hot springs to Little Rock, and I arrived in that capital early at noon.

Foreigners are constantly visiting every part of the United States, and yet very few, if any, have ever visited the Arkansas. They seem

all to be frightened away by the numerous stories of Arkansas murders, with which a tourist is always certain to be entertained on board one of the Mississippi steam-boats. Undoubtedly these reports of murders and atrocities have been, as all things else are in the United States, much exaggerated, but none can deny that the assizes of Arkansas contain more cases of stabbing and shooting than ten of the other states put together.

The very day I arrived at Little Rock I had an opportunity of witnessing two or three of these Arkansas incidents, and also to hear the comments made upon them. Legislature was then sitting. Two of the legislators happened to be of a contrary opinion, and soon abused each other. From words they came to blows, and one shot the other with one of Colt's revolving six-barrel pistols. This event stopped legislative business for that day; the corpse was carried to the tavern where I had just arrived, and the murderer, having procured

bail for two thousand dollars, ran away during the night, and nobody ever thought of searching for him.

The corpse proved to be a bonus for my landlord, who had it deposited in a room next to the bar, and as the news spread, all the male population of Little Rock came in crowds to see with their own eyes, and to give their own opinion of the case over a bottle of wine or a glass of whisky.

Being tired, I went to bed early, and was just dozing, in spite of the loud talking and swearing below, when I heard five or six shots fired in rapid succession, and followed by yells and screams. I got up and stopped a negro girl, as she was running up-stairs, a picture of terror and despair.

"What is the matter, Blackey?" said I, "are they shooting in the bar?"

"Oh, yes, Massa," she answered, "they shoot terrible. Dr. Francis says, Dr. Grey is a blackguard; Dr. Grey says, Dr. Francis is

a ruffian; Dr. Francis shoots with big pistols and kills Dr. Grey; Dr. Grey shoots with other pistols and kills Dr. Francis."

"What," I exclaimed, "after he was dead?"

"Oh no, Massa, before he was dead; they shoot together—pan, pan, pan."

I went down-stairs to ascertain the circumstances attending this double murder. A coroner's inquest had been held upon the body of the legislator killed in the morning, and the two surgeons, who had both drunk freely at the bar, had quarrelled about the direction which the ball had taken. As they did not agree, they came to words; from words to blows; ending in the grand *finale* of shooting each other.

I was so sickened and disgusted with the events of one day, that I paid my bill, saddled my horse myself, and got a man to ferry me over the Arkansas river, a noble, broad, and rapid stream, on the southern bank of which the capital is situated. I rode briskly for a

short hour, and camped in the woods alone, preferring their silence and dreariness to remaining to witness, under a roof, further scenes of bloodshed and murder.

North of the Arkansas river, the population, though rough and "not better than it should be," is less sanguinary and much more hospitable; that is to say, a landlord will shew you civility for your money, and in Batesville, a city (fifty houses, I think) upon the northern bank of the White River, I found thirty generals, judges, and majors, who condescended to shew me every bar in the place, purchasing sundry dozens of Havannahs and drinking sundry long toasts in iced wine, which wine and tobacco, although ordered and consumed by themselves, they left me to pay for, which I was willing to do, as I was informed that these gentlemen always refrain from paying any thing when a stranger is present, from fear of wounding his delicacy.

It was in Batesville that I became enlight-

ened as to the western paper currency, which was fortunate, as I purchased one hundred and forty dollars in "shin plasters," as they call them, for an English sovereign; and for my travelling expenses they answered just as well. In the White River ferry-boat, I met with one of those itinerant Italian pedlars, who are found, I think, everywhere under heaven, selling pins, needles, and badly-coloured engravings, representing all the various passages of William Tell's history, and the combats during the "three days," in 1830. Although not a refined companion, the Genevese spoke Italian, and I was delighted to converse in that soft tongue, not a word of which I had spoken since the death of Prince Seravalle. I invited my companion to the principal tavern, and called at the bar for two tumblers of iced-mint tulip.

"How much?" I asked from the bar-keeper.

"Five dollars," he answered.

I was quite thunderstruck, and, putting my

money back in my pocket, I told him I would not pay him at all. The man then began to swear I was a queer sort of a chap, and wondered how a *gentleman* could drink at a bar and not pay for his liquor.

"I always pay," I answered, "what others pay; but I will not submit to such a swindling, and give five dollars for what is only worth twenty-five cents."

The host then came to me, with a smile.

"Why, Sir, we don't charge more to you than to others. Five dollars in 'shin plasters,' or twenty-five cents in specie."

All was thus explained, and the next morning I satisfied my bill of twenty-two dollars with one dollar and twelve cents in silver.

This may appear strange to the English reader, who prefers bank-notes to gold; but he must reflect that England is not Arkansas, and that the Bank of England is not the "Real Estate Bank of Arkansas," capital two millions of dollars.

Notwithstanding the grandeur of the last five words, I have been positively informed that the bank never possessed five dollars, and had not been able to pay the poor Cincinnati engraver who made the notes. The merchants of Little Rock, who had set up the bank, were the usual purchasers of the produce from the farmer; but the credit of the bank was so bad, that they were obliged to offer three dollars in their notes for a bushel of wheat, which, in New York, commanded only eighty-four cents in specie.

The farmers, however, were as sharp as the merchants, and, compelled to deal with them, they hit upon a good plan. The principal landholders of every county assembled, and agreed that they would also have a farmer's bank, and a few months afterwards the country was inundated with notes of six-and-a-quarter, twelve-and-a-half, twenty-five, and fifty cents, with the following inscription: "We, the freeholders and farmers of such county, promise

to pay (so much) in Real Estate Bank of Arkansas notes, but not under the sum of five dollars."

The bankers were caught in their own snares. They were obliged to accept the "shin plasters" for the goods in their stores, with the pleasing perspective of being paid back with their own notes, which made their faces as doleful as the apothecary who was obliged to swallow his own pills.

CHAPTER V.

From Batesville to the southern Missouri border, the road continues for a hundred miles, through a dreary solitude of rocky mountains and pine forests, full of snakes and a variety of game, but without the smallest vestige of civilization. There is not a single blade of grass to be found, except in the hollows, and these are too swampy for a horse to venture upon. Happily, small clear and limpid brooks are passed every half-hour, and I had had the precaution to provide myself, at a farm, with a large bag of maize for my horse. After all, we fared better than we should have done at the log huts, and my faithful steed, at all events,

escaped the "ring." What the "ring" is, I will explain to the reader.

In these countries, it always requires a whole day's smart riding to go from one farm to another; and when the traveller is a "raw trotter" or a "green one" (Arkansas denomination for a stranger), the host employs all his cunning to ascertain if his guest has any money, as, if so, his object is to detain him as long as he can. To gain this information, although there are always at home half-a-dozen strong boys, to take the horses, he sends a pretty girl (a daughter, or a niece) to shew you the stable and the maize-store. This nymph becomes the traveller's attendant; she shews him the garden and the pigs, and the strangers' bed-room, &c. The consequence is, that the traveller becomes gallant, the girl insists upon washing his handkerchief and mending his jacket before he starts the next morning, and by keeping constantly with him, and continual conversation, she is, generally

speaking, able to find out whether the traveller has money or not, and reports accordingly.

Having supped, slept, and breakfasted, he pays his bill and asks for his horse.

"Why, Sir," answers the host, "something is wrong with the animal—he is lame."

The traveller thinks it is only a trifle; he starts, and discovers, before he has made a mile, that his beast cannot possibly go on; so he returns to the farm, and is there detained, for a week perhaps, until his horse is fit to travel.

I was once cheated in this very manner, and had no idea that I had been tricked; but, on leaving another farm, on the following day, I found my horse was again lame. Annoyed at having been delayed so long, I determined to go on, in spite of my horse's lameness. I travelled on for three miles, till at last I met with an elderly man also on horseback. He stopped and surveyed me attentively, and then addressed me:—

"I see, youngster, you are a green one."

Now I was in uncommon bad temper that morning, and I answered his question with a "What do you mean, you old fool?"

"Nay, pardon me," he resumed; "I would not insult a stranger. I am Governor Yell, of this state, and I see that some of my 'clever citizens' have been playing a trick upon you. If you allow me, I will cure the lameness of your horse in two minutes."

At the mention of his name, I knew I was speaking to a gentleman. I apologized for my rough rejoinder, and the governor, dismounting, then explained to me the mystery of the "ring." Just above my horse's hoof, and well concealed under the hair, was a stout silken thread, tied very tight; this being cut, the horse, in a moment, got rid of his lameness.

As the governor and I parted, he gave me this parental advice:—

"My dear young man," said he, "I will

give you a hint, which will enable you to travel safely through the Arkansas. Beware of pretty girls and honest, clever people; never say you are travelling further than from the last city to the nearest, as a long journey generally implies that you have cash; and, if possible, never put your horse in a stable. Farewell."

The soil in the Arkansas is rocky and mountainous as far as to the western border of the state, when you enter upon the great American desert, which continues to the other side of the Cimarron, nearly to the foot of the Cordilleras. The eastern portion of Arkansas, which is watered by the Mississippi, is an unknown swamp, for there the ground is too soft even for the light-footed Indian; and, I may say, that the whole territory contained between the Mississippi and the St. Francis river is nothing but a continued river-bottom.

It is asserted, on the authority of intelligent residents, that the river-bottoms of the St. Francis were not subject to be overflowed

previous to the earthquakes of 1811 and 1812, when an extensive tract in the valley of that river sunk to a considerable depth. According to Stoddart, who knew nothing of the shocks of 1811, earthquakes have been common here from the first settlement of the country; he himself experienced several shocks at Kaskaskia, in 1804, by which the soldiers stationed there were aroused from sleep, and the buildings were much shaken and disjointed. Oscillations still occur with such frequency as to be regarded with indifference by the inhabitants, who familiarly call them *shakes*. But the earthquakes of 1811 and 1812, which were felt from New England to New Orleans, are the only ones known to have left permanent traces, although there is every probability that this part of the valley of the Mississippi has been much convulsed at former periods.

In 1812, the earth opened in wide chasms, from which columns of water and sand burst

forth; hills disappeared, and their sites were occupied by lakes; the beds of the lakes were raised, and their waters flowed off, leaving them dry; the courses of the streams were changed by the elevation of their beds and the falling of their banks; for one whole hour the current of the Mississippi was turned backwards towards its source, until its accumulated waters were able to break through the barrier which had dammed them up; boats were dashed on the banks, or suddenly left dry in the deserted channel, or hurried backwards and forwards with the surging eddies; while in the midst of these awful changes, electric fires, accompanied by loud rumblings, flashed through the air, which was darkened with clouds and vapour.

In some places, submerged forests and canebrakes are still visible at a great depth, on the bottom of lakes, which were then formed. That the causes of these convulsions were not local, as some have imagined, is evident enough

from the fact, that the Azores, the West India Islands, and the northern coast of South America were unusually agitated at the same time, and the cities of Carracas, Laguayra, and some others were totally destroyed.

I had been advised not to stop at any house on the borders, and would have proceeded on to Missouri, bivouacking during the night, had it not been that the rainy season had just commenced, and it was far from pleasant to pass the night exposed to the most terrific showers of rain that could be imagined. When I arrived upon the St. Francis river, I found myself compelled by the state of the weather to stop at a parson's—I don't know what particular sect he professed to belong to ; but he was reputed to be the greatest hypocrite in the world, and the "smartest scoundrel" in the Arkansas.

My horse was put into the stable, my saddle into the hall, and I brought my saddle-bags into the sitting-room. Then, as usual, I went

to the well for a purification after my day's ride. To my astonishment, I found, on my return, that my saddle-bags had already disappeared. I had in them jewels and money to rather a considerable amount for a person in my position, and I inquired of a woman cooking in the next room what had become of them. She answered, she did not know, but that probably her father had put them out of the way.

I waited a long while, standing at the door, with no small anxiety, till at last I perceived the parson crossing an Indian corn-field, and coming towards the house. I went to meet him, and asked what he had done with my saddle-bags; to which question he answered angrily, he did not know what I meant; that I had no saddle-bags when I came to his house; that he suspected I was a knowing one, but could not come round so old a fox as he was.

As by that time I was perfectly *au fait* to

all the tricks of Arkansas smartness, I returned to the hall, took my pistols from the holsters, placed them in my belt, and, seizing my rifle, I followed his trail upon the soft ground of the fields. It led me to a corn-house, and there, after an hour's search, I found my lost saddle-bags. I threw them upon my shoulders, and returned to the house just as a terrible shower had commenced. When within fifteen yards from the threshold, the parson, with his wife and daughter, a pretty girl of sixteen, in tears, came up to me to apologize. The mother declared the girl would be the death of her, and the parson informed me, with great humility, that his daughter, having entered the room and seeing the saddle-bags, had taken and hidden them, believing that they belonged to her sweetheart, who was expected on a visit. Upon this, the girl cried most violently, saying she only wished to play a trick to Charley. She was an honest girl, and no thief.

I thought proper to pretend to be satisfied

with this explanation, and ordered my supper, and, shortly afterwards, to my great relief, new guests arrived; they were four Missourian planters, returning home from a bear-hunt, in the swamps of the St. Francis. One of them was a Mr. Courtenay, to whom I had a letter from Captain Finn, and, before the day had closed, I received a cordial invitation to go and stay with him for at least a week.

As he spoke French, I told him, in that language, my saddle-bag adventure; he was not surprised, as he was aware of the character of our host. It was arranged that Mr. Courtenay and I should sleep in a double-bedded room on the first floor; the other hunters were accommodated in another part of the house. Before retiring for the night, they all went to visit their horses, and the young girl took that opportunity to light me to the room.

"Oh, Sir," she said to me, after she had closed the door, "pray do not tell the other travellers what I did, or they would all say

that I am courting Charley, and my character would be lost."

"Mark me," replied I, "I have already told the story, and I know the Charley story is nothing but a —— what your father ordered you to say. When I went to the corn-house, the tracks I followed were those made by your father's heavy boots, and not by your light pumps and small feet. The parson is a villain; tell him that; and if it were not too much trouble, I would summon him before some magistrate."

The girl appeared much shocked, and I repented my harshness, and was about to address her more kindly, when she interrupted me.

"Spare me, Sir," she said, "I know all; I am so unhappy; if I had but a place to go to, where I could work for bread, I would do it in a minute, for here I am very, very miserable."

At that moment the poor girl heard the footsteps of the hunters returning from the stable, and she quitted me in haste.

When Mr. Courtenay entered the room, he told me he expected that the parson was planning some new iniquity, for he had seen him just then crossing the river in a dug-out. As every thing was to be feared from the rascal, after the circumstance of the saddle-bags, we resolved that we would keep a watch; we dragged our beds near the window, and laid down without undressing.

To pass away the time, we talked of Captain Finn and of the Texians. Mr. Courtenay related to me a case of negro stealing by the same General John Meyer, of whom my fellow companion, the parson, had already talked so much while we were travelling in Texas. One winter, Mr. Courtenay, returning from the East, was stopped in Vincennes (Indiana) by the depth of the snow, which for a few days rendered the roads impassable. There he saw a very fine breed of sheep, which he determined to introduce upon his plantation; and hearing that the general would be coming

down the river in a large flat boat as soon as the ice would permit, he made an agreement with him that he should bring a dozen of the animals to the plantation, which stood a few miles below the mouth of the Ohio, on the other side of the Mississippi.

Meyer made his bargain, and two months afterwards delivered the live stock, for which he received the price agreed upon. Then he asked permission to encamp upon Mr. Courtenay's land, as his boat had received some very serious injury, which could not be repaired under five or six days. Mr. Courtenay allowed Meyer and his people to take shelter in a brick barn, and ordered his negroes to furnish the boatmen with potatoes and vegetables of all descriptions.

Three or four days afterwards he was astonished by several of his slaves informing him the general had been tampering with them, saying they were fools to remain slaves, when they could be as free as white men, and that

if they would come down the river with him, he would take them to Texas, where he would pay them twenty dollars a month for their labour.

Courtenay advised them, by all means, to seem to accede to the proposition, and gave them instructions as to how they were to act. He then despatched notes to some twenty neighbours, requesting them to come to the plantation, and bring their whips with them, as they would be required.

Meyer having repaired his boats, came to return thanks, and to announce his departure early on the following morning. At eleven o'clock, when he thought every body in the house was asleep, he hastened, with two of his sons, to a lane, where he had made an appointment with the negroes to meet him and accompany him to his boat, which was ready to start. He found half-a-dozen of the negroes, and, advising them not to speak before they were fairly off the plantation, desired them to follow him to the boat; but, to his astonish-

ment, he soon discovered that the lane was occupied with other negroes and white men, armed with the much-dreaded cow-hides. He called out to his two sons to fly, but it was too late.

The general and his two sons were undoubtedly accustomed to such disasters, for they shewed amazing dexterity in taking advantage of the angles of the fences, to evade the lashes; but, in spite of all their devices, they were cruelly punished, as they had nearly a quarter of a mile of gauntlet to run through before they were clear of the lane. In vain they groaned, and swore, and prayed; the blows fell thicker and thicker, principally from the hands of the negroes, who, having now and then tasted of the cow-hide, were in high glee at the idea of flogging white men.

The worshipful general and his dutiful sons at last arrived at their boat, quite exhausted, and almost fainting under the agony of the well-applied lashes. Once on board, they cut

their cable, and pushed into the middle of the stream; and although Meyer had come down the river at least ten times since, he always managed to pass the plantation during night, and close to the bank of the opposite shore.

I told Mr. Courtenay what I knew myself about General John Meyer; while I was talking, his attention was attracted by a noise near the stables, which were situated at the bottom of a lane, before our windows. We immediately suspected that there would be an attempt to steal our horses; so I handed my rifle to my companion, who posted himself in a position commanding the lane, through which the thief or thieves must necessarily pass.

We waited thus in suspense for a few minutes, till Mr. Courtenay desired me to take his place, saying,—

"If any one passes the lane with any of our horses, shoot him; I will go down myself and thrash the blackguard, for I suspect the parson

will turn them into the swamps, where he is pretty certain of recovering them afterwards."

Saying this, he advanced to the door, and was just putting his hand upon the latch, when we heard a most terrific yell, which was followed by a neighing, which I recognized as that of my horse. Taking our pistols and bowie-knives, we hurried down the lane.

We found that our two horses, with a third, belonging to one of the hunters, were out of the stable, and tied neck and tail, so as to require only one person to lead them. The first one had the bridle on, and the last, which was mine, was in a state of excitement, as if something unusual had happened to him. On continuing our search, we found the body of a young man, most horribly mangled, the breast being entirely open, and the heart and intestines hanging outside.

It appeared that my faithful steed, which had already shewn, in Texas, a great dislike to

being taken away from me, had given the thief the terrible kick, which had thrown him ten or fifteen yards, as I have said, a mangled corpse. By this time, the other hunters came out to us; lights were procured, and then we learned that the victim was the parson's eldest son, newly married, and settled on the east side of the St. Francis. The parson was not long himself in making his appearance; but he came from an opposite direction to that of the house, and he was dressed as on the evening before: he had evidently not been to bed during that night.

As soon as he became aware of the melancholy circumstance, he raved and swore that he would have the lives of the damned Frenchman and his damnation horse; but Mr. Courtenay went to him, and said—

"Hold your tongue, miserable man! See your own work, for you have caused this death. It was to fetch your son, to help you to steal

the horses, that you crossed the river in the dug-out. Be silent, I say; you know me; look at your eldest-born, villain that you are! May the chain of your future misery be long, and the last link of it the gibbet, which you deserve!"

The parson was silent, even when his sobbing wife reproached him. "I warned thee, husband," she said; "even now has this come, and I fear that worse is still to come. Unlucky was the hour we met; still more so when the child was born;" and, leaning against the fence, she wept bitterly.

I will pass over the remainder of this melancholy scene. We all felt for the mother and the poor girl, who stood by with a look of despair. Saddling our horses, Mr. Courtenay and I resumed our journey, the hunters remaining behind till the arrival of the magistrate, whom we promised to send. To procure one, we were obliged to quit the high road,

and, after a ride of several miles, having succeeded in finding his house, we awoke him, gave him the necessary directions, and, at sunrise, forded the river.

CHAPTER VI.

At last we arrived at the plantation of Mr. Courtenay: the house was one of the very few buildings in the United States in which taste was displayed. A graceful portico, supported by columns; large verandahs, sheltered by jessamine; and the garden so green and so smiling, with its avenues of acacias and live fences of holly and locust, all recalled to my mind the scenes of my childhood in Europe. Every thing was so neat and comfortable; the stables so airy, the dogs so well housed, and the slaves so good-humoured-looking, so clean and well dressed.

When we descended from our horses, a

handsome lady appeared at the portico, with joy and love beaming in her face, as five or six beautiful children, having at last perceived our arrival, left their play to welcome and kiss their father. A lovely vision of youth and beauty also made its appearance—one of these slender girls of the South, a woman of fifteen years old, with her dark eyelashes and her streaming ebony hair; slaves of all ages—mulattoes and quadroon girls, old negroes and boy negroes, all calling together—"Eh! Massa Courtenay, kill plenty bear, dare say; now plenty grease for black family, good Massa Courtenay!"

Add to all this, the dogs barking and the horses neighing, and truly the whole *tableau* was one of unbounded affection and happiness. I doubt if, in all North America, there is another plantation equal to that of Mr. Courtenay.

I soon became an inmate of the family, and for the first time enjoyed the pleasures of

highly-polished society. Mrs. Courtenay was an admirable performer upon the harp; Miss Emma Courtenay, her niece, was a delightful pianist; and my host himself was no mean amateur upon the flute. Our evenings would pass quickly away, in reading Shakspeare, Corneille, Racine, Metastasio, or the modern writers of English literature; after which we would remain till the night had far advanced, enjoying the beautiful compositions of Beethoven, Gluck, and Mozart, or the brilliant overtures of Donizetti, Bellini, and Meyerbeer.

Thus my time passed like a happy dream, and as, from the rainy season having just set in, all travelling was impossible, I remained many weeks with my kind entertainers, the more willingly, that the various trials I had undergone had, at so early an age, convinced me that, upon earth, happiness was too scarce not to be enjoyed when presented to you. Yet in the midst of pleasure I did not forget the duty I owed to my tribe, and I sent letters to

Joe Smith, the Mormon leader at Nauvoo, that we might at once enter into an arrangement. Notwithstanding the bad season, we had some few days of sunshine, in which pretty Miss Emma and I would take long rambles in the woods; and sometimes, too, my host would invite the hunters of his neighbourhood, for a general *battue* against bears, deer, and wild cats. Then we would encamp out under good tents, and during the evening, while smoking near our blazing fires, I would hear stories which taught me more of life in the United States than if I had been residing there for years.

"Dis moi qui tu fréquentes, je te dirai qui tu es," is the old French proverb. Mr. Courtenay never chose his companions but among the more intellectual classes of the society around him, and, of course, these stories were not only well told, but interesting in their subject. Often the conversation would fall upon the Mormons, and perceiving how anxious I

was to learn any thing about this new sect, my host introduced me to a very talented gentleman, who had every information connected with their history. From him I learned the particulars which gave rise to Mormonism, undoubtedly the most extraordinary imposition of the nineteenth century.

There existed years ago a Connecticut man, named Solomon Spalding, a relation of the one who invented the wooden nutmegs. By following him through his career, the reader will find him a Yankee of the true stock. He appears at first as a law student; then as a preacher, a merchant, and a bankrupt; afterwards he becomes a blacksmith in a small western village; then a land speculator and a county schoolmaster; later still, he becomes the owner of an iron-foundry; once more a bankrupt; at last, a writer and a dreamer.

As might be expected, he died a beggar somewhere in Pennsylvania, little thinking that, by a singular coincidence, one of his productions (the

"Manuscript found"), redeemed from oblivion by a few rogues, would prove in their hands a powerful weapon, and be the basis of one of the most anomalous, yet powerful secessions which has ever been experienced by the Established Church.

We find, under the title of the "Manuscript found," an historical romance of the first settlers of America, endeavouring to shew that the American Indians are the descendants of the Jews, or the lost tribes. It gives a detailed account of their journey from Jerusalem, by land and by sea, till they arrived in America, under the command of Nephi and Lehi. They afterwards had quarrels and contentions, and separated into two distinct nations, one of which is denominated Nephites, and the other Lamanites.

Cruel and bloody wars ensued, in which great multitudes were slain. They buried their dead in large heaps, which caused the mounds now so commonly found on the continent of

America. Their knowledge in the arts and sciences, and their civilization, are dwelt upon, in order to account for all the remarkable ruins of cities and other curious antiquities, found in various parts of North and South America.

Solomon Spalding writes in the biblic style, and commences almost every sentence with, "And it came to pass,"—"Now, it came to pass."

Although some powers of imagination and a degree of scientific information are displayed throughout the whole romance, it remained for several years unnoticed, on the shelves of Messrs. Patterson and Lambdin, printers, in Pittsbourg.

Many years passed, when Lambdin the printer, having failed, wished *to raise the wind by some book speculation.* Looking over the various manuscripts then in his possession, the "Manuscript found," venerable in its dust, was, upon examination, looked upon as a gold

mine, which would restore to affluence the unfortunate publisher. But death summoned Lambdin away, and put an end to the speculation, as far as his interests were concerned.

Lambdin had intrusted the precious manuscript to his bosom friend, Sidney Rigdon, that he might embellish and alter it, as he might think expedient. The publisher now dead, Rigdon allowed this *chef-d'œuvre* to remain in his desk, till, reflecting upon his precarious means, and upon his chances of obtaining a future livlihood, a sudden idea struck him. Rigdon well knew his countrymen and their avidity for the marvellous; he resolved to give to the world the "*manuscript found,*" not as a mere work of imagination or disquisition, as its writer had intended it to be, but as a new code of religion, sent down to man, as of yore, on awful Sinai, the tables were given unto Moses.

For some time, Rigdon worked very hard, studying the Bible, altering his book, and

preaching every Sunday. As the reader may easily imagine, our Bible student had been, as well as Spalding, a Jack of all trades, having successively filled the offices of attorney, bar-keeper, clerk, merchant, waiter, newspaper editor, preacher, and, finally, a hanger-on about printing-offices, where he could always pick up some little job in the way of proof correcting and so forth.

To us this variety of occupations may appear very strange, but among the unsettled and ambitious population of the United States, men at the age of fifty have been, or at least have tried to be, every thing, not in gradation, from the lowest up to the highest, but just as it may happen—doctor yesterday and waiter to-day—the Yankee philosopher will to-morrow run for a seat in legislature; if he fails, he may turn a Methodist preacher, a Mormon, a land-speculator, a member of the "Native American Society," or a mason—that is to say, a journeyman mason.

Two words more upon Rigdon, before we leave him in his comparative insignificance! He is undoubtedly the father of Mormonism, and the author of the "Golden Book," with the exception of a few subsequent alterations made by Joe Smith. It was easy for him, from the first planning of his intended imposture to publicly discuss, in the pulpit, many strange points of controversy, which were eventually to become the corner-stones of the structure which he wished to raise.

The novelty of the discussions was greedily received by many, and, of course, prepared them for that which was coming. Yet, it seems that Rigdon soon perceived the evils which his wild imposture would generate, and he recoiled from his task, not because there remained lurking in his breast some few sparks of honesty, but because he wanted courage; he was a scoundrel, but a timorous one, and always in dread of the penitentiary. With him, Mormonism was a mere money specula-

tion, and he resolved to shelter himself behind some fool who might bear the whole odium, while he would reap a golden harvest, and quietly retire before the coming of a storm. But, as is often the case, he reckoned without his host; for it so happened that, in searching for a tool of this description, he found in Joe Smith one not precisely what he had calculated upon. He wanted a compound of roguery and folly as his tool and slave; Smith was a rogue and an unlettered man, but he was what Rigdon was not aware of—a man of bold conception, full of courage and mental energy, one of those unprincipled, yet lofty, aspiring beings who, centuries past, would have succeeded as well as Mahomet, and who has, even in this more enlightened age, accomplished that which is wonderful to contemplate.

When it was too late to retract, Rigdon perceived with dismay that, instead of acquiring a silly bondsman, he had subjected himself

to a superior will; he was now himself a slave, bound by fear and interest, his two great guides through life. Smith consequently became, instead of Rigdon, "the elect of God," and is now at the head of thousands, a great religious and political leader.

From the same gentleman, I also learned the history of Joseph Smith; and I will lay before the reader what, from various documents, I have succeeded in collecting concerning this remarkable impostor, together with a succinct account of the rise and progress of this new sect, as it is a remarkable feature in the history of nations.

CHAPTER VII.

My readers have already been made acquainted with the history of the "Book," upon which the imposture of Mormonism has been founded, and of the acquaintance which took place between Rigdon and Joe Smith, whose career I shall now introduce.

The father of Joe was one of a numerous class of people who are termed, in the west, "money diggers," living a sort of vagrant life, imposing upon the credulous farmers by pretending that they knew of treasure concealed, and occasionally stealing horses and cattle. Joseph Smith was the second son, and a great favourite of his father, who stated every-

where that Joe had that species of second sight, which enabled him to discover where treasure was hidden. Joe did certainly turn out very smart, and it was prophesied by the "old ones" that, provided he was not hung, Joe would certainly become a general, if he did not gain the office of president of the United States. But Joe's smartness was so great, that Palmyra, where his father usually resided, became too small for the exercise of his talents, and our hero set off on his travels.

Some time afterwards Joe was again heard of. In one of his rambles, he had gone to Harmony (Pennsylvania), and there formed an acquaintance with a young woman. In the fall of 1826, being then at Philadelphia, he resolved to go and get married to her, but, being destitute of means, he now set his wits to work to raise some money and get a recommendation, so as to obtain the fair one of his choice. He went to a man named Lawrence, and stated that he had discovered in Pennsyl-

vania, on the bank of the Susquehanna river, a very rich mine of silver, and if he, Lawrence, would go there with him, he might have a share in the profits; that it was near high-water mark, and that they could put the silver into boats, and take it down the river to Philadelphia, and dispose of it. Lawrence asked Joseph if he was not deceiving him.

"No," replied Joe, "for I have been there and seen it with my own eyes, and if you do not find it so when we get there, I will bind myself to be your servant for three years."

By oaths, asseverations, and fair promises, Lawrence was induced to believe in Joe's assertion, and agreed to go with him; and as Joseph was out of money, Lawrence had to defray the whole expenses of the journey. When they arrived at Harmony, Joseph was strongly recommended by Lawrence, who was well known to the parents of the young woman; after which they proceeded on their journey to the silver mine, made a diligent

search, and of course found nothing. Thus Lawrence had his trouble for his pains, and returned home with his pockets lighter than when he started, whilst honest Joe had not only his expenses paid, but a good recommendation to the father of his fair one.

Joe now proposed to marry the girl, but the parents were opposed to the match. One day, when they happened to be from home, he took advantage of the opportunity, went off with her, and the knot was tied.

Being still destitute of money, he now again set his wits to work, to contrive to get back to Manchester, at that time his place of residence, and he hit upon the following plan, which succeeded. He went to an honest old Dutchman, by the name of Stowel, and told him that he had discovered on the banks of the Black River, in the village of Watertown (Jefferson County, N.Y.), a cave, in which he found a bar of gold as big as his leg, and about three or four feet long; that he could

not get it out alone on account of its great weight; and if Stowel would frank him and his wife to Manchester (N. Y.), they would then go together to the cave, and Stowel should share the prize with him. The good Dutchman consented.

A short time after their arrival at Manchester, Stowel reminded Joseph of his promise, but he coolly replied that he could not go just then, as his wife was among strangers, and would be very lonesome if he quitted her. Mr. Stowel was, like Mr. Lawrence, obliged to return without any remuneration, and with less money than he came. I mention these two freaks of Joe Smith, as they explain the money-digger's system of fraud.

It would hardly be believed that, especially among the cunning Yankees, such "mines and treasures" stories should be credited; but it is a peculiar feature in the U. S. that the inhabitants, so difficult to overreach in other matters, will greedily take the bait when

"mines" or "hidden treasure" are spoken of. In Missouri and Wisconsin, immense beds of copper ore and lead have been discovered in every direction. Thousands of poor, ignorant farmers, emigrants from the East, have turned diggers, miners, and smelters. Many have accumulated large fortunes in the space of a few years, and have returned "wealthy gentlemen" to their own native state, much to the astonishment of their neighbours.

Thus has the "mining spirit" been kept alive, and impostors of every variety have reaped their harvest, by speculating upon the well-known avidity of the "*people of America!*"

It was in the beginning of 1827, that Joe, in a trip to Pittsburg, became acquainted with Rigdon. A great intimacy took place betwixt them, and they paid each other alternate visits —Joe coming to Pittsburg and Rigdon going to the Susquehanna, *for pleasure excursions, at a friend's.* It was also during the same

year that the Smith family assumed a new character. In the month of June, Joseph Smith, sen., went to a wealthy, but credulous farmer, and related the following story :—

"That some years ago, a spirit had appeared to Joe, his son, and, in a vision, informed him that in a certain place there was a record on plates of gold, and that he was the person who must obtain them, and this he must do in the following manner :—On the 22nd of September, he must repair to the place where these plates of gold were deposited, dressed in black clothes, and riding a black horse, with a switch tail, and demand the plates in a certain name; and, after obtaining them, he must immediately go away, and neither lay them down nor look behind him."

The farmer gave credit to old Smith's communication. He accordingly fitted out Joseph with a suit of black clothes, and borrowed a black horse. Joe (by his own account) repaired to the place of deposit, and

demanded the plates, which were in a stone box, unsealed, and so near the surface of the ground that he could see one end of it; raising the lid up, he took out the plates of gold; but fearing some one might discover where he got them, he laid them down, to replace the top stone as he had found it; when, turning round, to his surprise, there were no plates to be seen. He again opened the box, and saw the plates in it; he attempted to take them out, but was not able. He perceived in the box something like a toad, which gradually assumed the appearance of a man, and struck him on the side of his head. Not being discouraged at trifles, Joe again stooped down and attempted to take the plates, when the spirit struck him again, knocked him backwards three or four rods, and hurt him very much: recovering from his fright, he inquired of the spirit, why he could not take the plates; to which the spirit made reply, "Because you have not obeyed your orders." He then inquired when he could

have them, and was answered thus: "Come one year from this day, and bring with you your eldest brother; then you shall have them."

"This spirit," said the elder Joseph Smith, "was the spirit of the prophet who wrote this book, and who was sent to Joe Smith, jun., to make known these things to him. Before the expiration of the year, the eldest brother died; which," the old man said, "was a decree of Providence." He also added—

"Joe went one year from that day to demand the plates, and the spirit inquired for his brother, and Joe replied that he was dead. The spirit then commanded him to come again in one year from that day, and bring a man with him. On asking who might be the man, he was answered that he would know him when he saw him."

Thus, while Rigdon was concocting his Bible and preaching new doctrines, the Smith family were preparing the minds of the people

for the appearance of something wonderful; and although Joe Smith was well known to be a drunken vagabond, he succeeded in inspiring, in hundreds of uneducated farmers, a feeling of awe which they could not account for. I must here stop in my narrative, to make a few observations.

In the great cities of Europe and America, civilization, education, and the active bustle of every-day life, have, to a great degree, destroyed the superstitious feelings so common among the lower classes, and have completely removed the fear of evil geniuses, goblins, and spirits. But such is not the case in the Western country of the United States, on the borders of the immense forests and amidst the wild and broken scenery of glens and mountains, where torrents roll with impetuosity through caves and cataracts; where, deprived of the amusements and novelties which would recreate his imagination, the farmer allows his mind to be oppressed with strange fancies, and

though he may never avow the feeling, from the fear of not meeting with sympathy, he broods over it and is a slave to the wild phantasmagoria of his brain. The principal cause of this is, the monotony and solitude of his existence.

At these confines of civilization, the American is always a hunter, and those who dwell on the smaller farms, at the edges of forests, often depend, for their animal food, upon the skill of the male portion of their community. In the fall of the year, the American shoulders his rifle and goes alone into the wilds, to "see after his pigs, horses, and cows." Constantly on the look-out for deer and wild bees, he resorts to the most secluded spots, to swamps, mountain ridges, or along the bushy windings of some cool stream. Constant views of nature in her grandeur, the unbroken silence of his wanderings, causes a depression of the mind, and, as his faculties of sight and hearing are ever on the stretch, it affects his ner-

vous system. He starts at the falling of a dried leaf, and, with a keen and painful sensation, he scrutinizes the withered grass before him, aware that at every step he may trample upon some venomous and deadly reptile. Moreover, in his wanderings, he is often pressed with hunger and is exposed to a great deal of fatigue.

"Fast in the wilds, and you will dream of spirits," is an Indian axiom, and a very true one. If to the above we add, that his mind is already prepared to receive the impressions of the mysterious and marvellous, we cannot wonder at their becoming superstitious. As children, they imbibe a disposition for the marvellous; during the long evenings of winter, when the snow is deep and the wild wind roars through the trees, the old people will smoke their pipes near huge blazing logs, and relate to them some terrible adventure. They speak of unearthly noises heard near some caves, of hairbreadth escapes in encounters with evil spirits,

under the form of wild animals; and many will whisper that at such a time of night, returning from some neighbouring market, they have met with the evil one in the forest, in such and such a spot, where the two roads cross each other, or where the old oak has been blasted by lightning.

The boy grows to manhood, but these family traditions are deeply engraved in his memory, and when alone, in the solitude, near the "haunted places," his morbid imagination embodies the phantoms of his diseased brain. No wonder, then, that such men should tamely yield to the superior will of one like Joe Smith, who, to their knowledge, wanders alone by moonlight in the solitude of forests, and who, in their firm belief, holds communication with spirits of another world. For, be it observed, that Smith possesses all the qualities and exercises all the tricks of the necromancers during the middle ages. His speech is ambiguous, solemn, and often incomprehensible—

a great proof to the vulgar of his mystical vocation.

Cattle and horses, lost for many months, have been recovered through the means of Joe, who, after an inward prayer, looked through a sacred stone, "the gift of God," as he has asserted, and discovered what he wished to know. We need not say that, while the farmer was busy at home with his crop, Smith and his gang, ever rambling in woods and glens, were well acquainted with every retired shady spot, the usual abode of wild as well as of tame animals, who seek there, during the summer, a shelter against the hot rays of the sun. Thus, notwithstanding his bad conduct, Smith had spread his renown for hundreds of miles as that of a "strange man;" and when he started his new religion, and declared himself "a prophet of God," the people did not wonder. Had Rigdon, or any other, presented himself, instead of Joe, Mormonism would never have been established; but in the

performer of *mysterious deeds*, it seemed a natural consequence. As the stone we have mentioned did much in raising Joe to his present high position, I will here insert an affidavit made relative to Joe Smith's obtaining possession of this miraculous treasure.

"Manchester, Ontario County, N. Y., 1833.

"I became acquainted with the Smith family, known as the authors of the Mormon Bible, in the year 1820. At that time they were engaged in the money-digging business, which they followed until the latter part of the season of 1827. In the year 1822, I was engaged in digging a well; I employed Joe Smith to assist me. After digging about twenty feet below the surface of the earth, we discovered a singular-looking stone, which excited my curiosity. I brought it to the top of the well, and as we were examining it, Joseph laid it in the crown of his hat, and then put his face into the top of his hat. It has been said by Smith,

that he got the stone from God, but this is false.

"The next morning Joe came to me, and wished to obtain the stone, alleging that he could see in it; but I told him I did not wish to part with it, on account of its being a curiosity, but would lend it. After obtaining the stone, he began to publish abroad what wonders he could discover by looking in it, and made so much disturbance among the credulous part of the community, that I ordered the stone to be returned to me again. He had it in his possession about two years. I believe, some time in 1825, Hiram Smith (Joe's brother) came to me, and wished to borrow the same stone, alleging that they wanted to accomplish some business of importance, which 'could not very well be done without the aid of the stone.' I told him it was of no particular worth to me, but I merely wished to keep it as a curiosity, and if he would pledge me his word and honour that I

should have it when called for, he might have it; which he did, and took the stone. I thought I could rely on his word at this time, as he had made a profession of religion; but in this I was disappointed, for he disregarded both his word and honour.

"In the fall of 1826, a friend called upon me, and wished to see that stone about which so much had been said; and I told him, if he would go with me to Smith's (a distance of about half a mile), he might see it. To my surprise, however, on asking Smith for the stone, he said, 'You cannot have it.' I told him it belonged to me; repeated to him the promise he made me at the time of obtaining the stone; upon which he faced me with a malignant look, and said, '*I don't care who the devil it belongs to; you shall not have it.*'

"Col. NAHUM HOWARD."

CHAPTER VIII.

I MUST pass over many details interesting in themselves, but too long to insert in this work. It must suffice to say, that after a time Joe Smith stated that he had possession of the golden plates, and had received from heaven a pair of spectacles by means of which the unknown characters could be decyphered by him. It may appear strange that such absurd assertions should be credited, but the reader must call to mind the credence given in this country to Joanna Southcote, and the infatuation displayed by her proselytes to the very last.

The origin of Mormonism deserves peculiar examination from the success which has at-

tended the imposture, and the prospects which it has of becoming firmly established as a new creed. At its first organization, which took place at the time that the golden plates were translating, which the reader may suppose was nothing more than the contents of the book that Rigdon had obtained possession of, and which had been originally written by S. Spalding, there were but six members of the new creed.

These first members, consisting mostly of persons who were engaged with Smith in the translation of the plates, forthwith applied themselves with great zeal to building up the church. Their first efforts were confined to Western New York and Pennsylvania, where they met with considerable success. After a number of converts had been made, Smith received a revelation that he and all his followers should go to Kirkland, in Ohio, and there take up their abode. Many obeyed this command, selling their possessions, and helping each other to settle on the spot designated. This

place was the head-quarters of the Church and the residence of the prophets until 1838; but it does not appear that they ever regarded it as a permanent settlement; for, in the Book of Covenants, it is said, in speaking of Kirkland, "I consecrate this land unto them for a little season, until I the Lord provide for them to go home."

In the spring of 1831, Smith, Rigdon, and others declared themselves directed by revelation to go on a journey to Missouri, and there the Lord was to shew them the place of the New Jerusalem. This journey was accordingly taken, and when they arrived, a revelation was received, pointing out the town of Independence, in Jackson county, as the central spot of the land of promise, where they were directed to build a temple, &c. &c. Shortly after their return to Kirkland, a number of revelations were received, commanding the saints throughout the country to purchase and settle in this land of promise. Accordingly, many went and

began there to build up "Zion," as they called it.

In 1831, a consecration law was established in the church by revelation. It was first published in the Book of Covenants, in the following words:—"If thou lovest me, thou shalt keep my commandments, and thou shalt consecrate all thy properties unto me with a covenant and deed which cannot be broken." This law, however, has been altered since that time. As modified, it reads thus:—"If thou lovest me, thou shalt serve and keep all of my commandments, and, behold, thou shalt remember the poor, and consecrate of thy properties for their support that which thou hast to impart unto them, with a covenant and a deed which cannot be broken."

In April, 1832, a firm was established by revelation, ostensibly for the benefit of the church, consisting of the principal members in Kirkland and Independence. The members of this firm were bound together by an oath and

covenant to manage the affairs of the poor, and all things pertaining to the church, both in Zion (Missouri) and in Shinakar (Kirkland). In June, 1833, another revelation was received to lay off Kirkland in lots, and the proceeds of the sale were to go to this firm. In 1834 or 1835, the firm was divided by revelation, so that those in Kirkland continued as one firm, and those in Missouri as another. In the same revelation they are commanded to divide the consecrated property between the individuals of the firm, which each separately were to manage as stewards.

Previous to this (1833), a revelation was received to build a temple, which was to be done by the consecrated funds, which were under the control of the firm. In erecting this building the firm involved itself in debt to a large amount; to meet which, in the revelation last mentioned, the following appears: "Inasmuch as ye are humble and faithful, and call on my name, behold, I will give you the victory.

I give unto you a promise that you shall be delivered this once out of your bondage, inasmuch as you obtain a chance to loan money by hundreds and thousands, even till you have obtained enough to deliver yourselves out of bondage." This was a command to borrow money, in order to free themselves from the debt that oppressed them. They made the attempt, but failed to get sufficient to meet their exigencies. This led to another expedient.

In 1835, Smith, Rigdon, and others formed a mercantile house, and purchased goods in Cleveland and in Buffalo to a very large amount, on a credit of six months. In the fall, other houses were formed, and goods purchased in the eastern cities to a still greater amount. A great part of the goods of these houses went to pay the workmen on the temple, and many were sold on credit, so that when the notes came due the house was not able to meet them. Smith, Rigdon, and Co. then

attempted to borrow money, by issuing their notes, payable at different periods after date. This expedient not being effectual, the idea of a bank suggested itself. Accordingly, in 1837, the far-famed Kirkland bank was put into operation, without any charter.

This institution, by which so many have been swindled, was formed after the following manner. Subscribers for stock were allowed to pay the amount of their subscriptions in town lots, at five or six times their real value; others paid in personal property at a high valuation; and some paid the cash. When the notes were first issued, they were current in the vicinity, and Smith took advantage of their credit to pay off with them the debts he and the brethren had contracted in the neighbourhood for land and other purchases. The eastern creditors, however, refused to take their notes. This led to the expedient of exchanging them for the notes of other banks.

Accordingly the elders were sent off the

country to barter Kirkland money, which they did with great zeal, and continued the operation until the notes were not worth sixpence to the dollar. As might have been expected, this institution exploded after a few months, involving Smith and his brethren in inextricable difficulties. The consequence was, that he and most of the members of the church set off, in the spring of 1838, for Missouri, pursued by their creditors, but to no effect.

We must now go back for a short period to state another circumstance. In 1836, an endowment meeting, or solemn assembly, was called, to be held in the temple at Kirkland. It was given out that those who were in attendance at the meeting should receive an endowment or blessing similar to that experienced by the disciples of Christ on the day of Pentecost. When the day arrived, great numbers convened from the different churches in the country. They spent the day in fasting and prayer, and in washing and perfuming

their bodies; they also washed their feet and anointed their heads with what they called holy oil, and pronounced blessings.

In the evening, they met for the endowment; the fast was then broken, by eating light wheat bread and drinking as much wine as they thought proper. Smith knew well how to infuse the spirit which they expected to receive; so he encouraged the brethren to drink freely, telling them that the wine was consecrated, and would not make them drunk. As may be supposed, they drank to some purpose; after this, they began to prophesy, pronouncing blessings upon their friends and curses upon their enemies; after which the meeting adjourned.

We now return to Missouri. The Mormons who had settled in and about Independence, in the year 1831, having become very arrogant, claiming the land as their own, saying, the Lord had given it to them, and making the most haughty assumptions, so exasperated the

old citizens, that a mob was raised in 1833, and expelled the whole Mormon body from the county. They fled to Clay county, where the citizens permitted them to live in quiet until 1836, when a mob spirit began to manifest itself, and the Mormons retired to a very thinly settled district of the country, where they began to make improvements.

This district was, at the session of 1836-7 of the Missouri legislature, erected into a county, by the name of Caldwell, with Far-West for its capital. Here the Mormons remained in quiet until after the bank explosion in Kirkland, in 1838, when Smith, Rigdon, and others of the heads of the sect arrived. Shortly after this, the Danite Society was organized, the object of which, at first, was to drive the dissenters out of the county. The members of this society were bound by an oath and covenant, with the penalty of death attached to a breach of it, to defend the presidency, and each other, unto death, right or wrong. They had their

secret signs, by which they knew each other, either by day or night; and were divided into bands of tens and fifties, with a captain over each band, and a general over the whole. After this body was formed, notice was given to several of the dissenters to leave the county, and they were threatened severely in case of disobedience. The effect of this was, that many of the dissenters left: among these were David Whitmer, John Whitmer, Hiram Page, and Oliver Cowdery, all witnesses to the Book of Mormon; also Lyman Johnson, one of the twelve apostles.

The day after John Whitmer left his house in Far-West, it was taken possession of by Sidney Rigdon. About this time, Rigdon preached his famous "Salt Sermon." The text was—"Ye are the salt of the earth, but if the salt has lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." He informed the Mormons that

the Church was the salt; that dissenters were the salt that had lost its flavour; and that they were literally to be trodden under the foot of the Church, until their bowels should gush out.

In one of the meetings of the Danite band, one of the leaders informed them that the time was not far distant, when the elders of the Church should go forth to the world with swords at their sides, and that they would soon have to go through the state of Missouri, and slay every man, woman, and child! They had it in contemplation at one time to prophesy a dreadful pestilence in Missouri, and then to poison the waters of the state, to bring it about, and thus to destroy the inhabitants.

In the early part of the fall of the year 1838, the last disturbance between the Mormons and the Missourians commenced. It had its origin at an election in Davies county, where some of the Mormons had located. A

citizen of Davies, in conversation with a Mormon, remarked that the Mormons all voted one way: this was denied with warmth; a violent contest ensued, when, at last, the Mormon called the Missourian a liar. They came to blows, and the quarrel was followed by a row between the Mormons and the Missourians.

A day or two after this, Smith, with a company of men from Far-West, went into Davies county, for the purpose, as they said, of quelling the mob; but when they arrived, the mob had dispersed. The citizens of Davies gathered in their turn; however, the Mormons soon collected a force to the amount of five hundred men, and compelled the citizens to retire; they fled, leaving the country deserted for many miles around. At this time, the Mormons killed between two and three hundred hogs, and a number of cattle; took at least forty or fifty stands of honey, and at the same time destroyed several fields of corn.

The word was given out, that the Lord had consecrated, through the Church, the spoils unto his host.

All this was done when they had plenty of their own, and previous to the citizens in that section of the country taking any thing from them. They continued these depredations for near a week, when the Clay County Militia was ordered out. The contest was a bloody one: suffice it to say, that, finally, Smith, Rigdon, and many others were taken, and, at a court of inquiry, were remanded over for trial. Rigdon was afterwards discharged on *habeas corpus*, and Smith and his comrades, after being in prison several months, escaped from their guards, and reached Quincy, Illinois. The Mormons had been before ordered to leave the state, by direction of the governor, and many had retired to Illinois previous to Smith's arrival.

The Mormons, as a body, arrived in Illinois in the early part of the year 1839, in a state

of great destitution and wretchedness. Their condition, with their tales of persecutions and privations, wrought powerfully upon the sympathies of the citizens, and caused them to be received with the greatest hospitality and kindness. After the arrival of Smith, the greater part of them settled at Commerce, situated upon the Mississippi river, at the lower rapids, just opposite the entrance of the river Des Moines, a site equal in beauty to any on the river. Here they began to build, and in the short time of four years they have raised a city. At first, as was before said, on account of their former sufferings, and also from the great political power which they possessed, from their unity, they were treated by the citizens of Illinois with great respect; but subsequent events have turned the tide of feeling against them.

In the winter of 1840, they applied to the legislature of the state for several charters; one for the city of Nauvoo, the name Smith

had given to the town of Commerce; one for the Nauvoo legion, a military body; one for manufacturing purposes, and one for the Nauvoo University. The privileges which they asked for were very extensive, and such was the desire to secure their political support, that all were granted for the mere asking; indeed, the leaders of the American legislature seemed to vie with each other in sycophancy towards this body of fanatical strangers, so anxious was each party to do them some favour that would secure their gratitude. This tended to produce jealousy in the minds of the neighbouring citizens, and fears were expressed lest a body so united religiously and politically, might become dangerous to liberal institutions.

The Mormons had at every election voted in a body with their leaders; this alone made them formidable. The legion of Mormons had been amply supplied with arms by the state, and the whole body was under the strictest

military discipline. These facts, together with complaints similar to those which were made in Missouri, tended to arouse a strong feeling against them, and at last, in the early part of the summer of 1841, the citizens of Illinois organized a strong force in opposition; the Mormons were beaten in the contest. The disposition now manifested by the citizens, appears to be to act upon the defensive, but at all hazards to maintain their rights.

As regards the pecuniary transactions of the Mormons since they have been in Illinois, Smith still uses his power for his own benefit. His present arrangements are to purchase land at a low rate, lay it off into town lots, which he sells to his followers at a high price; thus lots that scarcely cost him a dollar, are frequently sold for a thousand. He has raised several towns in this manner, both in Illinois and in Ioway.

During the last year, he has made two proclamations to his followers abroad, to come

and settle in the county of Hancock. These proclamations have been obeyed to a great extent, and, strange to say, hundreds have been flocking in from the great manufacturing cities of England. What is to be the result of all this, it is impossible to tell; but one thing is certain, that, in a political point of view, the Mormons are already powerful, and that the object of Smith is evidently to collect all his followers into one focus, and thus concentrate all his power and wealth.

The designs of Smith and his coadjutors, at the time of the first publication of the Book of Mormon, was, doubtlessly, nothing more than pecuniary aggrandizement. We do not believe they expected at that time that so many could ever be duped to be converted; when, however, the delusion began to spread, the publishers saw the door opened not only for wealth, but also for extensive power, and their history throughout shews that they have not been remiss in their efforts to acquire both.

The extent of their desires is now by no means limited, for their writings and actions shew a design to pursue the same path, and attain the same end by the same means, as did Mahomet. The idea of a second Mahomet arising in the nineteenth century may excite a smile, but when we consider the steps now taken by the Mormons to concentrate their numbers, and their ultimate design to unite themselves with the Indians, it will not be at all surprising, if scenes unheard of since the days of feudalism should soon be re-enacted.

I will here submit to my readers a letter directed to Mr. Courtenay in 1842, by a superior officer of the United States artillery.

"Yesterday (July the 10th) was a great day among the Mormons; their legion, to the number of three thousand men, was reviewed by Generals Smith, Bennet, and others, and certainly made a very noble and imposing appearance; the evolutions of the troops commanded by Joe would do honour to any body

of regular soldiers in England, France, or Prussia. What does this mean? Why this exact discipline of the Mormon corps? Do they intend to conquer Missouri, Illinois, Mexico? It is true they are part of the militia of the state of Illinois, by the charter of their legion, but then there are no troops in the States like them in point of discipline and enthusiasm; and led on by ambitious and talented officers, what may not be effected by them? perhaps the subversion of the constitution of the United States; and if this should be considered too great a task, foreign conquest will most certainly be attempted. The northern provinces of Mexico will fall into their hands, even if Texas should first take possession of them.

"These Mormons are accumulating, like a snow-ball rolling down an inclined plane. They are also enrolling among their officers some of the first talent in the country, by titles which they give and by money which they can com-

mand. They have appointed Captain Henry Bennet, late of the United States army, Inspector-general of their legion, and he is commissioned as such by Governor Carlin. This gentleman is known to be well skilled in fortification, gunnery, and military engineering generally; and I am assured that he is receiving regular pay, derived from the tithing of this warlike people. I have seen his plans for fortifying Nauvoo, which are equal to any of Vauban's.

"General John C. Bennet (a New England man) is the prophet's great gun. They call him, though a man of diminutive stature, the 'forty-two pounder.' He might have applied his talents in a more honourable cause; but I am assured that he is well paid for the important services he is rendering this people, or, I should rather say, rendering the prophet. This gentleman exhibits the highest degree of field military talent (field tactics), united with extensive learning. He may yet become dangerous

to the states. He was quarter-master-general of the state of Illinois, and, at another time, a professor in the Erie university. It will, therefore, be seen that nothing but a high price could have secured him to these fanatics. Only a part of their officers and professors are Mormons; but then they are united by a common interest, and will act together on main points to a man. Those who are not Mormons when they come here, very soon become so, either from interest or conviction.

"The Smiths are not without talent; Joe, the chief, is a noble-looking fellow, a Mahomet every inch of him; the postmaster, Sidney Rigdon, is a lawyer, a philosopher, and a saint. The other generals are also men of talent, and some of them men of learning. I have no doubt they are all brave, as they are most unquestionably ambitious, and the tendency of their religious creed is to annihilate all other sects. We may, therefore, see the time when this gathering host of religious fanatics will

make this country shake to its centre. A western empire is certain. Ecclesiastical history presents no parallel to this people, inasmuch as they are establishing their religion on a learned basis. In their college, they teach all the sciences, with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Italian, and Spanish; the mathematical department is under an extremely able professor, of the name of Pratt; and a professor of Trinity college, Dublin, is president of their university.

"I arrived there, incog., on the 1st inst., and, from the great preparations for the military parade, was induced to stay to see the turn-out, which, I confess, has astonished and filled me with fears for the future consequences. The Mormons, it is true, are now peaceable, but the lion is asleep. Take care, and don't rouse him.

"The city of Nauvoo contains about fifteen thousand souls, and is rapidly increasing. It is well laid out, and the municipal affairs

appear to be well conducted. The adjoining country is a beautiful prairie. Who will say that the Mormon prophet is not among the great spirits of the age?

"The Mormons number, in Europe and America, about one hundred and fifty thousand, and are constantly pouring into Nauvoo and the neighbouring country. There are probably in and about this city, at a short distance from the river, not far from thirty thousand of these warlike fanatics, and it is but a year since they have settled in the Illinois."

CHAPTER IX.

While I was at Mr. Courtenay's plantation I had a panther adventure, a circumstance which, in itself, would be scarcely worth mentioning, were it not that this fierce animal was thought to have entirely left the country for more than twenty years. For several days there had been a rapid diminution among the turkeys, lambs, and young pigs in the neighbourhood, and we had unsuccessfully beaten the briars and canebrakes, expecting at every moment to fall in with some large tiger-cat, which had strayed from the southern brakes. After much fruitless labour, Mr. Courtenay came to the conclusion that a gang of negro marroons were

hanging about, and he ordered that a watch should for the future be kept every night.

It happened that the whole family was one day invited to a wedding on the other side of the river. Not having any clothes fit for a party, I remained at home, and at mid-day started on horseback alone, with all the dogs, for a battue. The day was sultry, although windy; as the roar of the wind in the canes prevented me from hearing the barking of the dogs, having arrived at one of our former hunting camping places, fifteen miles from the house, I threw myself upon the ground, and allowed my horse to graze. I had scarcely been half an hour occupied in smoking my pipe, when all the dogs, in full cry, broke from the briars, and rushed into the canebrakes, passing me at a distance of thirty yards. I knew it was neither bear nor deer that they were running after, and as I had observed a path through the canes, I leaped upon my saddle, and followed the chase, wondering what it

could be, as, had the animal been any of the smaller feline species, it would have kept to the briars, where dogs have never the least chance against them.

I rode briskly till I arrived at a large cypress swamp, on the other side of which I could perceive through the openings another cane-brake, higher and considerably thicker. I fastened my horse, giving him the whole length of the lasso, to allow him to browse upon the young leaves of the canes, and with my bowie knife and rifle entered the swamp, following the trail of the dogs. When I came to the other cane-brake, I heard the pack before me barking most furiously, and evidently at bay. I could only be directed by the noise, as it was impossible for me to see any thing; so high and thick were the canes, that I was obliged to open a way with my knife, and it was with much trouble and fatigue that I arrived within twenty yards of the dogs. I knew that I was once more approaching a swamp, for the canes were

becoming thinner; raising my eyes, I perceived that I was in the vicinity of a large cotton tree, at the foot of which probably the dogs were standing. Yet I could not see them, and I began to examine with care the upper limbs of the tree, to ascertain if any tiger-cat had lodged itself upon some of the forks. But there was nothing that I could discover; cutting the canes on the left and the right, I advanced ten yards more, when, to my surprise, I perceived, thirty feet above me, a large panther embracing the trunk of a tree with its huge paws, and looking angrily below at the dogs.

I would have retired, but I dared not, as I feared that the least noise would attract the attention of the animal, who would spring upon me from its elevated position. The dogs barked louder and louder; twice I raised my rifle, but did not fire, my nerves were too much agitated, and my arms shook. At last I regained my self-command, and reflecting that

among the pack there were some dogs almost a match for the terrible animal, I rested my rifle upon the limb of one of the heavy canes, and fired: my aim was true, the brute fell mortally wounded, though not dead; half of the dogs were upon it in a moment, but, shaking them off, the animal attempted to re-ascend the tree. The effort, however, was above its strength, and, after two useless springs, it attempted to slip away. At that moment the larger dogs sprang upon the animal, which could struggle no longer, as life was ebbing fast with the stream of blood. Ere I had time to reload my rifle, it was dead.

When I approached, all the dogs were upon the animal, except a fierce little black bitch, generally the leader of the pack; I saw her dart through the canes with her nose on the ground, and her tail hanging low. The panther was a female, very lean, and of the largest size; by her dugs I knew she had a cub which could not be far off, and I tried to in-

duce the pack to follow the bitch, but they were all too busy in tearing and drinking the blood of the victim, and it was not safe to use force with them. For at least ten minutes I stood contemplating them, waiting till they would be tired. All at once I heard a bark, a growl, and a plaintive moan. I thought at first that the cub had been discovered, but as the dogs started at full speed, following the chase for more than twenty minutes, I soon became convinced that it must be some new game, either a boar or a bear. I followed, but had not gone fifty steps, when a powerful rushing through the canes made me aware that the animal pursued had turned back on its trail, and, twenty yards before me, I perceived the black bitch dead and horribly mangled. I was going up to her, when the rushing came nearer and nearer; I had just time to throw myself behind a small patch of briars, before another panther burst out from the cane-brakes.

I had never seen before so tremendous, and,

at the same time, so majestic and so beautiful an animal, as with a long and light spring it broke out of the canes. It was a male; his jaws were covered with foam and blood; his tail was lashing through the air, and at times he looked steadily behind, as if uncertain if he would run or fight his pursuers. At last his eyes were directed to the spot where the bitch lay dead, and with a single bound he was again upon the body, and rolled it under his paws till it had lost all shape. As the furious animal stood thus twenty yards before me, I could have fired, but dared not to do so, while the dogs were so far off. However, they soon emerged from the brake, and rushed forward. A spirited young pup, a little ahead of the others, was immediately crushed by his paw, and making a few bounds towards a large tree, he climbed to the height of twenty feet, where he remained, answering to the cries of the dogs with a growl as loud as thunder.

I fired, and this time there was no struggle.

My ball had penetrated through the eye to the brain, yet the brute in its death struggle still clung on.

At last the claws relaxed from their hold, and it fell down a ponderous mass, terrible still in death.

The sun had already set, and not wishing to lose any time in skinning the animal, I merely cut off its long tail, which I secured as a trophy round my waist. My adventures, however, were not yet terminated, for while I was crossing the short width of cane-brake which was between me and where the she-panther laid dead, the dogs again gave tongue, and, in less than three minutes, had tracked another animal. Night was coming on pretty fast, and I was beginning to be alarmed. Till now I had been successful, each time having destroyed, with a single ball, a terrible enemy, whom even the boldest hunters fear to attack alone; but should I have the same good luck in a third encounter? It was more than I could expect,

especially as the darkness would render it more difficult to take a certain aim. I therefore allowed the dogs to bark as much as they pleased, and forced my way to my first victim, the tail of which I also severed, as a proof of my prowess. It, however, occurred to me that if there were many more panthers in the cover, it would be very unsafe to return alone to where I had left my horse. I therefore made sure that my rifle was in good order, and proceeded towards the place where the dogs were still baying. There I beheld another panther, but this time it was a sport unattended by any danger, for the animal was a very young cub, who had taken refuge fifteen feet from the ground upon a tree which had been struck by lightning, and broken off about three yards from its roots. The animal was on the broken part which had its summit entangled in the lower branches of another tree.

It was truly a pretty sight, as the little animal's tail, hanging down, served as a *point*

de mire to all the dogs, who were jumping up to catch it. The cub was delighted, mewing with high glee, sometimes running up, sometimes down, just to invite his playfellows to come to him. I felt great reluctance to kill so graceful and playful an animal, but it became a necessity, as no endeavours of mine could have forced the dogs to leave it. I shot him, and, tying him round my neck, I now began to seek with some anxiety for the place where I had left my horse.

There is but little twilight in America, in the spring of the year especially; great was my hurry, and consequently less was my speed. I lost my trail, bogged myself in a swamp, tore my hands and face with the briars, and, after an hour of severe fatigue, at last heard my horse, who was impatient at being left alone, neighing loudly. Though my distance to the house was only eighteen miles and the road quite safe, I contrived to lose myself three or four times, till, *en désespoir*, I threw

the bridle on my horse's neck, trusting to his instinct to extricate me from my difficulties.

It was nearly midnight when I approached the back fences of Mr. Courtenay's plantation, and I wondered very much at seeing torches glaring in every direction. I galloped rapidly through the lane, and learned from a negro that the family had long returned home, and that supper had been, as usual, served at eight o'clock; that they had been anxiously waiting for me, and that Mr. Courtenay, fearing some accident had happened, had resolved to go himself in search of me with the major portion of his negroes. Leaving my horse to the care of the slave, I ran towards the house, where the dogs had already announced my arrival. The family came under the portico to welcome me, and simultaneously asked me what could have detained me so long. "I have caught the robbers," replied I, approaching the group, "I have killed them, and lost two dogs; here are my *spolia opima*."

My host was thunderstruck; he was too much of a hunter not to be able to estimate the size of the animals by the tokens I had brought with me, and he had believed that for the last twenty or thirty years, not one of these terrible animals was actually living in the country. The fact was so very remarkable, that he insisted on going himself that very night with his negroes to skin the animals; and, after a hasty meal, he left us to fulfil his intentions. Relating my adventures to my kind hostess and her niece, I had the satisfaction of feeling that my narrative excited emotions which could only arise from a strong interest in my welfare.

This panther story got wind, and nothing could convince the neighbouring farmers but the very sight of the skins. All the western newspapers related the matter, and for two months at least I was quite a "lion."

A few days after that adventure, the Caroline, the largest and finest steam-boat upon

the Mississippi, struck a snag in coming down the stream, and sank immediately. The river, however, being very low, the upper decks remained above water, and help coming down from the neighbouring plantations, all the passengers were soon brought on shore without any loss of life. Three hundred sheep, one hundred hogs, eighty cows, and twelve horses were left to their fate, and it was a painful sight to witness the efforts of the poor brutes struggling against the powerful current and looking towards the people on shore, as if to implore for help.

Only one pig, two cows, and five horses ever reached the bank of the river, many disappearing under the repeated attacks of the gar-fish and other monsters, and the remainder carried by the stream to feed the alligators and the cawanas of the south. But very few objects on board were insured, and hundreds of hogsheads of Missouri tobacco and barrels of Kentucky flour were several days afterwards

picked up by the Arkansas and Tennessee wreckers. Articles thus lost by shipwreck upon the Mississippi are seldom reclaimed, as the principal owners of the goods, on hearing the news, generally collect all the property which they can, run away, change their names, and enter upon new speculations in another state.

Among the passengers on board, Mr. Courtenay recognized several of his friends, whom he directly invited into the mansion, while temporary sheds were erected for the others, till some steam-boat should pass and take them off. So sudden had been the catastrophe, that no luggage of any kind had been saved, and several Englishmen, travelling to purchase cotton and minerals, suffered very serious loss. As to the Americans themselves, though they complained very loudly, vowing they would bring an action against the river, the steam-boats, against every boat and every thing, for I don't know how many millions of dollars,

their losses were very trifling, as it is the custom for a man in the Western States to carry all his money in his pocket-book and his pocket-book in his pocket; as to luggage, he never has any except a small valise, two feet long, in which are contained a shirt, two bosoms, three frills, a razor, and a brush, which may serve for his head, clothing, boots, and perhaps teeth.

It was amusing to hear all the complaints that were made, and to enumerate the sums which were stated to have been lost; there was not one among the travellers, even among those who had taken a deck-passage, who had not lost from ten to fifty thousand dollars, with which he was going to purchase a cotton plantation, a steam-boat, or a whole cargo of Havannah cigars. What made it more ridiculous was the facility with which every body found a witness to certify his loss. "I had five thousand dollars," one would say; "ask the general, he will tell you if it is true."

"True, as I am an honest man," would answer the general, "to wit, that I swapped with the judge my eastern notes for his southern ones."

It would be impossible to explain to a sober Englishman the life that is led on, and the numerous tricks that are played in a Mississippi steam-boat. One I will mention, which will serve as a sample. An itinerant preacher, well known as a knave upon both banks and the whole length of the river, used (before he was sent to the Penitentiary for picking pockets) to live comfortably in the steam-boats without ever paying a farthing. From St. Louis he would book for New Orleans, and the passage-money never being asked in the West but at the termination of the trip, the preacher would go on shore at Vicksburg, Natches, Bayon, Sarah, or any other such station in the way. Then he would get on board any boat bound to the Ohio, book himself for Louisville, and step on shore at Mem-

phis. He had no luggage of any kind except a green cotton umbrella; but, in order to lull all suspicion, he contrived always to see the captain or the clerk in his office, and to ask them confidentially if they knew the man sleeping in the upper bed, if he was respectable, as he, the preacher, had in his trunks considerable sums intrusted to him by some societies. The consequence was, that, believing him rich, the captain and officers would pay him a great deal of attention, inviting him to wine and liquor. When he disappeared, they would express how sorry they were to have been obliged to leave the gentleman behind, but they hoped they would see him at St. Louis, New Orleans, or Louisville, or hear from him, so as to know where to direct his trunks. But they would soon ascertain that there were no trunks left behind, that there had never been any brought on board, and that they had been duped by a clever sharper.

In less than twenty-four hours almost all the

passengers had got on board some other boats, but those who had been invited by Mr. Courtenay tarried a few days with us, for we were on the eve of a great fishing party on the lake, which in the Far-West is certainly a very curious scene. Among the new guests were several cotton-planters from the South, and English cotton-brokers. One of them had passed a short time among the Mormons, at Nauvoo, and had many amusing stories to tell of them. One I select among many, which is the failure of an intended miracle by Joe Smith.

Towards the close of a fine summer's day, a farmer of Ioway found a respectable-looking man at his gate, who requested permission to pass the night under his roof. The hospitable farmer readily complied; the stranger was invited into the house, and a warm and substantial supper set before him.

After he had eaten, the farmer, who appeared to be a jovial, warm-hearted, humorous, and withal shrewd old man, passed several hours

in conversation with his guest, who seemed to be very ill at ease, both in body and mind; yet, as if desirous of pleasing his entertainer, he replied courteously and agreeably to whatever was said to him. Finally, he pleaded fatigue and illness as an excuse for retiring to rest, and was conducted by the farmer to an upper chamber, where he went to bed.

About the middle of the night, the farmer and his family were awakened by dreadful groans, which they soon ascertained proceeded from the chamber of the traveller. On going to ascertain the cause, they found that the stranger was dreadfully ill, suffering the most acute pains and uttering the most doleful cries, apparently quite unconscious of what was passing around him. Every thing that kindness and experience could suggest was done to relieve the sick man; but all efforts were in vain, and, to the consternation of the farmer and his family, their guest, in the course of a few hours, expired.

At an early hour in the morning, in the midst of their trouble and anxiety, two travellers came to the gate, and requested entertainment. The farmer told them that he would willingly offer them hospitality, but that just now his household was in the greatest confusion, on account of the death of a stranger, the particulars of which he proceeded to relate to them. They appeared to be much surprised and grieved at the poor man's calamity, and politely requested permission to see the corpse. This, of course, the farmer readily granted, and conducted them to the chamber in which laid the dead body. They looked at it for a few minutes in silence, and then the oldest of the pair gravely told the farmer that they were elders of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and were empowered by God to perform miracles, even to the extent of raising the dead; and that they felt quite assured they could bring to life the man who laid dead before them!

The farmer was, of course, "pretty considerably" astonished at the quality and powers of the persons who addressed him, and, rather incredulously asked if they were quite sure that they could perform all which they professed.

"O certainly! not a doubt of it. The Lord has commissioned us expressly to work miracles, in order to prove the truth of the prophet Joseph Smith, and the inspiration of the books and doctrines revealed to him. Send for all your neighbours, that, in the presence of a multitude, we may bring the dead man to life, and that the Lord and his church may be glorified to all men."

The farmer, after a little consideration, agreed to let the miracle-workers proceed, and, as they desired, sent his children to his neighbours, who, attracted by the expectation of a miracle, flocked to the house in considerable numbers.

The Mormon elders commenced their task

by kneeling and praying before the body with uplifted hands and eyes, and with most stentorian lungs. Before they had proceeded far with their prayer, a sudden idea struck the farmer, who quietly quitted the house for a few minutes, and then returned, and waited patiently by the bedside, until the prayer was finished, and the elders ready to perform their miracle. Before they began, he respectfully said to them, that, with their permission, he wished to ask them a few questions upon the subject of this miracle. They replied that they had no objection. The farmer then asked,—

"You are quite certain that you can bring this man to life again?"

"We are."

"How do you know that you can?"

"We have just received a revelation from the Lord, informing us that we can."

"Are you quite sure that the revelation was from the Lord?"

"Yes; we cannot be mistaken about it."

"Does your power to raise this man to life again depend upon the particular nature of his disease? or could you now bring any dead man to life?"

"It makes no difference to us; we could bring any corpse to life."

"Well, if this man had been killed, and one of his arms cut off, could you bring him to life, and also restore to him his arm?"

"Certainly! there is no limit to the power given us by the Lord. It would make no difference, even if both his arms and legs were cut off."

"Could you restore him, if his head had been cut off?"

"Certainly we could!"

"Well," said the farmer, with a quiet smile upon his features, "I do not doubt the truth of what such holy men assert; but I am desirous that my neighbours here should be fully converted, by having the miracle performed in the completest manner possible. So, by your

leave, if it makes no difference whatever, I will proceed to cut off the head of this corpse."

Accordingly, he produced a huge and well-sharpened broad axe from beneath his coat, which he swung above his head, and was, apparently, about to bring it down upon the neck of the corpse, when, lo and behold! to the amazement of all present, the dead man started up in great agitation, and swore that, "by hell and jingo," he would not have his head cut off, for any consideration whatever!

The company immediately seized the Mormons, and soon made them confess that the pretended dead man was also a Mormon elder, and that they had sent him to the farmer's house, with directions to die there at a particular hour, when they would drop in, as if by accident, and perform a miracle that would astonish every body. The farmer, after giving the impostors a severe chastisement, let them depart to practise their *humbug* in some other quarter.

These two "*Elders of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,*" were honest Joe and his worthy *compeer* and coadjutor, Sidney Rigdon.

CHAPTER X.

The day of the fishing at length arrived; our party of ladies and gentlemen, with the black cooks and twenty slaves, started two hours before sunrise, and, after a smart ride of some twelve miles, we halted before a long row of tents, which had been erected for the occasion, on the shores of one of these numerous and beautiful western lakes. Fifty negroes were already on the spot, some cutting wood for fuel, some preparing breakfast, while others made ready the baits and lines, or cleaned empty barrels, in which our intended victims were to be salted. We scarcely had had time to look around us, when, from twenty different

quarters, we beheld the approach of as many parties, who had been invited to share the sport. We greeted them planter fashion :— "Are you hungry, eh, eh?—Sam, Napoleon, Washington, Cæsar—quick—the breakfast."

For several days previous, all the creeks of the neighbourhood had been drained of their cray-fish, minnows, and shell-fish. All the dug-outs and canoes from every stream thirty miles round had also been dragged to the lake, and it was very amusing to see a fleet of eighty boats and canoes of every variety, in which we were about to embark to prosecute our intentions against the unsuspecting inhabitants of the water.

After a hearty, though somewhat hasty meal, we proceeded to business, every white man taking with him a negro, to bait his line and unhook the fish; the paddles were soon put in motion, and the canoes, keeping a distance of fifty yards from each other, having now reached the deepest part of the lake, bets

were made as to who would pull up the first fish, the ladies on shore watching the sport, and the caldrons upon the fire ready to receive the first victims. I must not omit to mention, that two of the larger canoes, manned only by negroes, were ordered to pull up and down the line of fishing-boats and canoes, to take out the fish as they were captured.

At a signal given by the ladies, the lines were thrown into the lake, and, almost at the same moment, a deafening hurrah of a hundred voices announced that all the baits had been taken before reaching the bottom, every fisherman imagining that he had won his bet. The winner, however, could never be ascertained, and nobody gave it a second thought, all being now too much excited with the sport. The variety of the fish was equal to the rapidity with which they were taken : basses, perch, sun-fish, buffaloes, trouts, and twenty other sorts. In less than half an hour my canoe was full to sinking; and I should certainly

have sunk with my cargo, had it not been most opportunely taken out by one of the spare boats. All was high glee on shore and on the lake, and the scene was now and then still diversified by comic accidents, causing the more mirth, as there was no possibility of danger.

The canoe next to me was full to the gunwale, which was not two inches above water: it contained the English traveller and a negro, who was quite an original in his way. As fish succeeded to fish, their position became exceedingly ludicrous: the canoe was positively sinking, and they were lustily calling for assistance. The spare boat approached rapidly, and had neared them to within five yards, when the Englishman's line was suddenly jerked by a very heavy fish, and so unexpectedly, that the sportsman lost his equilibrium and fell upon the larboard side of the canoe.

The negro, wishing to restore the equilibrium, threw his weight on the opposite side;

unluckily, this had been the simultaneous idea of his white companion, who also rolled over the fish to starboard. The canoe turned the turtle with them, and away went minnows, crawfish, lines, men, and all. Every body laughed most outrageously, as the occupants of the canoe re-appeared upon the surface of the water and made straight for the shore, not daring to trust to another canoe after their ducking. The others continued fishing till about half-past nine, when the rays of the sun were becoming so powerful as to compel us to seek shelter in the tents.

If the scene on the lake had been exciting, it became not less so on shore, when all the negroes, male and female, crowding together, began to scale, strip, and salt the fish. Each of them had an account to give of some grand fishery, where a monstrous fish, a mile in length, had been taken by some fortunate "Sambo" of the South. The girls gaped with terror and astonishment, the men winking and

trying to look grave, while spinning these yarns, which certainly beat all the wonders of the veracious Baron Munchausen.

The call to renew the sport broke off their ludicrous inventions. Our fortune was as great as in the forenoon, and at sunset we returned home, leaving the negroes to salt and pack the fish in barrels, for the supply of the plantation.

A few days afterwards, I bade adieu to Mr. Courtenay and his delightful family, and embarked myself and horse on board of one of the steamers bound to St. Louis, which place I reached on the following morning.

St. Louis has been described by so many travellers, that it is quite useless to mention any thing about this "queen city of the Mississippi." I will only observe, that my arrival produced a great sensation among the inhabitants, to whom the traders in the Far West had often told stories about the wealth of the Shoshones. In two or three days, I received a

hundred or more applications from various speculators, "to go and kill the Indians in the West, and take away their treasures;" and I should have undoubtedly received ten thousand more, had I not hit upon a good plan to rid myself of all their importunities. I merely sent all the notes to the newspapers as fast as I received them; and it excited a hearty laugh amongst the traders, when thirty letters appeared in the columns, all of them written in the same tenor and style.

One evening I found at the post-office a letter from Joseph Smith himself, in which he invited me to go to him without any loss of time, as the state of affairs having now assumed a certain degree of importance, it was highly necessary that we should at once come to a common understanding. Nothing could have pleased me more than this communication, and the next morning I started from St. Louis, arriving before noon at St. Charles, a small town upon the Missouri, inhabited almost

entirely by French creoles, fur traders, and trappers. There, for the first time, I saw a steam ferry, and, to say the truth, I do not understand well how horses and waggons could have been transported over before the existence of steam-boats, as, in that particular spot, the mighty stream rolls its muddy waters with an incredible velocity, forming whirlpools, which seem strong enough to engulf any thing that may come into them.

From St. Charles I crossed a hilly land, till I arrived once more upon the Mississippi; but there "the father of the waters" (as the Indians call it) presented an aspect entirely new: its waters, not having yet mixed with those of the Missouri, were quite transparent; the banks, too, were several hundred feet high, and recalled to my mind the countries watered by the Buona Ventura river. For two days I continued my road almost always in sight of the stream, till at last, the ground becoming

too broken and hilly, I embarked upon another steam ferry at Louisiana, a rising and promising village, and landed upon the shores of Illinois, where the level prairies would allow of more rapid travelling.

The state of Missouri, in point of dimensions, is the second state of the Union, being inferior in extent only to Virginia. It extends from 36° to 40° 35′ N. lat., and from 89° 20′ to 95° W. long., having an area of about 68,500 square miles. Its boundaries, as fixed by the Constitution, are a line drawn from a point in the middle of the Mississippi, in 36° N. lat., and along that parallel, west to its intersection, a meridian line, passing through the mouth of the Kansas. Thence, the western boundary was originally at that meridian; but, by act of Congress in 1836, the triangular tract between it and the Missouri, above the mouth of the Kansas, was annexed to the state. On the north, the parallel of latitude which passes

through the rapids of the river Desmoines forms the boundary between that river and the Missouri.

The surface of that portion of the state which lies north of the Missouri is, in general, moderately undulating, consisting of an agreeable interchange of gentle swells and broad valleys, and rarely, though occasionally, rugged, or rising into hills of much elevation. With the exception of narrow strips of woodland along the water-courses, almost the whole of this region is prairie, at least nine-tenths being wholly destitute of trees. The alluvial patches or river-bottoms are extensive, particularly on the Missouri, and generally of great fertility; and the soil of the upland is equal, if not superior, to that of any other upland tract in the United States. The region south of the Missouri river and west of the Osage, is of the same description; the northern and western Missouri country is most delightful, a soil of inexhaustible fertility and a salubrious

climate rendering it a most desirable and pleasant residence; but south-east of the latter river, the state is traversed by numerous ridges of the Ozark mountains, and the surface is here highly broken and rugged.

This mountainous tract has a breadth of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty miles; but although it often shoots up into precipitous peaks, it is believed that they rarely exceed two thousand feet in height; no accurate measurements of their elevation have, however, been made, and little is known of the course and mutual relations of the chains. The timber found here is pitch-pine, shrub oaks, cedar, &c. &c., indicative of the poverty of the soil; in the uplands of the rest of the state, hickory, post-oak, and white oaks, &c., are the prevailing growth; and in river-bottoms, the cotton tree, sycamore or button-wood, maple, ash, walnut, &c. &c., predominate. The south-eastern corner of the state, below Cape Girardeau, and east of the Black River,

is a portion of the immense inundated region which borders the Arkansas. A considerable part of this tract is indeed above the reach of the floods, but these patches are isolated and inaccessible, except by boats, during the rise of the waters.

My friend Mr. Courtenay penetrated these swamps with three Indians and two negroes. His companions were bogged and lost; he returned, having killed seven fine elks and two buffaloes. Some of these mighty animals have been breeding there for a long while, undisturbed by man.

The state of Missouri is abundantly supplied with navigable channels, affording easy access to all parts. The Mississippi washes the eastern border, by the windings of the stream, for a distance of about four hundred and seventy miles. Above St. Genevieve, it flows for the most part between high and abrupt cliffs of limestone, rising to an elevation of from one hundred to four hundred feet above the surface

of the river; sometimes separated from it by bottoms of greater or less width, and at others springing up abruptly from the water's edge. A few miles below Cape Girardeau, and about thirty-five miles above the mouth of the Ohio, are the rocky ledges, called the Little and Grand Chain; and about half-way between that point and St. Genevieve, is the Grand Tower, one of the wonders of the Mississippi. It is a stupendous pile of rocks, of a conical form, about one hundred and fifty feet high and one hundred feet circumference at its base, rising up out of the bed of the river. It seems, in connection with the rocky shores on both sides, to have been opposed, at some former period, as a barrier to the flow of the Mississippi, which must here have had a perpendicular fall of more than one hundred feet.

The principal tributaries of the Mississippi, with the exception of the Missouri, are the Desmoines, Wyacond, Fabius, Salt, and Copper River, above that great stream, and the Merri-

mac, St. Francis, and White River below; the two last passing into Arkansas. Desmoines, which is only a boundary stream, is navigable one hundred and seventy miles, and Salt River, whose northern sources are in Iowa, and southern in Boone county, and which takes its name from the salt licks or salines on its borders, may be navigated by steam-boats up to Florida (a small village); that is to say, ninety-five or a hundred miles. The Rivière au Cuivre, or Copper River, is also a navigable stream; but the navigation of all these rivers is interrupted by ice in winter, and by shoals and bars in the dry season.

The Missouri river flows through the state for a distance of about six hundred miles; but although steam-boats have ascended it two thousand five hundred miles from its mouth, its navigation is rendered difficult and dangerous by sand-bars, falling banks, snags, and shifting channels.

The bank of the Mississippi river, on the

Illinois side, is not by far so picturesque as the country I have just described, but its fertility is astonishing. Consequently, the farms and villages are less scattered, and cities, built with taste and a great display of wealth, are found at a short distance one from the other. Quincy I may mention, among others, as being a truly beautiful town, and quite European in its style of structure and neatness. Elegant fountains are pouring their cool waters at the end of every row of houses; some of the squares are magnificent, and, as the town is situated upon a hill several hundred feet above the river, the prospect is truly grand.

At every place where I stopped between St. Louis and Quincy, I always heard the Mormons abused and spoken of as a set of scoundrels, but from Quincy to Nauvoo the reports were totally different. The higher or more enlightened classes of the people have overlooked the petty tricks of the Mormon leaders, to watch with more accuracy the

advance and designs of Mormonism. In Joe Smith they recognize a great man, a man of will and energy, one who has the power of carrying every thing before him, and they fear him accordingly.

On leaving Quincy, I travelled about seventy miles through a country entirely flat, but admirably cultivated. I passed through several little villages, and at noon of the second day I reached my destination.

CHAPTER XI.

Nauvoo, the holy city of the Mormons, and present capital of their empire, is situated in the north-western part of Illinois, on the east bank of the Mississippi, in lat. 40° 35′ N.; it is bounded on the north, south, and west by the river, which there forms a large curve, and is nearly two miles wide. Eastward of the city is a beautiful undulating prairie; it is distant ten miles from Fort Madison, in Iowa, and more than two hundred from St. Louis.

Before the Mormons gathered there, the place was named *Commerce*, as I have already said, and was but a small and obscure village of some twenty houses; so rapidly,

however, have they accumulated, that there are now, within four years of their first settlement, upwards of fifteen thousand inhabitants in the city, and as many more in its immediate vicinity.

The surface of the ground upon which Nauvoo is built is very uneven, though there are no great elevations. A few feet below the soil is a vast bed of limestone, from which excellent building material can be quarried, to almost any extent. A number of *tumuli*, or ancient mounds, are found within the limits of the city, proving it to have been a place of some importance with the former inhabitants of the country.

The space comprised within the city limits is about four miles in its extreme length, and three in its breadth; but is very irregular in its outline, and does not cover so much ground as the above measurement would seem to indicate.

The city is regularly laid out, the streets

crossing each other at right angles, and generally of considerable length, and of convenient width. The majority of the houses are still nothing more than log cabins, but lately a great number of plank and brick houses have been erected. The chief edifices of Nauvoo are the Temple, and an hotel, called the Nauvoo House, but neither of them is yet finished; the latter is of brick, upon a stone foundation, and presents a front of one hundred and twenty feet, by sixty feet deep, and is to be three stories high, exclusive of the basement. Although intended chiefly for the reception and entertainment of strangers and travellers, it contains, or rather will contain, a splendid suite of apartments for the particular accommodation of the prophet Joe Smith, and his heirs and descendants for ever.

The privilege of this accommodation he pretends was granted to him by the Lord, in a special revelation, on account of his services

to the Church. It is most extraordinary that the Americans, imbued with democratic sentiments and with such an utter aversion to hereditary privileges of any kind, could for a moment be blinded to the selfishness of the prophet, who thus easily provided for himself and his posterity a palace and a maintenance.

The Mormon temple is a splendid structure of stone, quarried within the bounds of the city; its breadth is eighty feet, and its length one hundred and forty, independent of an outer court of thirty feet, making the length of the whole structure one hundred and seventy feet. In the basement of the temple is the baptismal font, constructed in imitation of the famous brazen sea of Solomon; it is supported by twelve oxen, well modelled and overlaid with gold. Upon the sides of the font, in panels, are represented various scriptural subjects, well painted. The upper story of the temple will, when finished, be used as a lodge-room for the Order Lodge and other

secret societies. In the body of the temple, where it is intended that the congregation shall assemble, are two sets of pulpits, one for the priesthood, and the other for the grandees of the church.

The cost of this noble edifice has been defrayed by tithing the whole Mormon church. Those who reside at Nauvoo and are able to labour, have been obliged to work every tenth day in quarrying stone, or upon the building of the temple itself. Besides the temple, there are in Nauvoo two steam saw-mills, a steam flour-mill, a tool-factory on a large scale, a foundery, and a company of considerable wealth, from Staffordshire, have also established there a manufacture of English china.

The population of the holy city itself is rather of a mixed kind. The general gathering of the saints has, of course, brought together men of all classes and characters. The great majority of them are uneducated and

unpolished people, who are undoubtedly sincere believers in the prophet and his doctrines. A great proportion of them consist of converts from the English manufacturing districts, who were easily persuaded by Smith's missionaries to exchange their wretchedness at home for ease and plenty in the promised land. These men are devotedly attached to the prophet's will, and obey his orders as they would those of God himself.

These aliens can, by the law of Illinois, vote after six months' residence in the state, and they consequently vote blindly, giving their votes according to the will of Joe Smith. To such an extent does his will influence them, that at the election in Nauvoo (1842) there were but six votes against the candidates he supported. Of the Mormons, I believe the majority to be ignorant, deluded men, really and earnestly devoted to their new religion. But their leaders are men of intellect, who profess Mormonism because of the wealth,

titles,* rank, and power which it procures them.

As a military position, Nauvoo, garrisoned by twenty or thirty thousand fanatics, well armed and well supplied with provisions, would be most formidable. It is unapproachable upon

* I have mentioned the word *titles:* I must make mys e understood. There are certain classes of individuals in the United States who, by their own fortune, education, and social position, could not be easily brought over to Mormonism. Joe Smith, as a founder of a sect, has not only proved himself a great man, but that he perfectly understands his countrymen, and, above all, their greediness for any kind of distinction which can nominally raise them above the common herd; for it is a fact that no people hate the word equality more than the American. Joe Smith has instituted titles, dignities, and offices corresponding to those of the governments in the Old World. He has not yet dared to make himself a king, but he has created a nobility that will support him when he thinks proper to assume the sovereign title. Thus he has selected individuals expressly to take care of the Church; these form the order of the Templars, with their grand masters, &c. &c. He has organized a band of soldiers, called *Danites*, a sacred battalion—the *celeres* of Romulus—these are all *comites* or counts; their chiefs are *conductors*, or dukes. Then follow the pontiffs, the bishops, &c. &c. This plan has proved to answer well, as it has given to Mormonism many wealthy individuals from the eastern states, who accepted the titles and came over to Europe to act as emissaries from Joe, under the magnificent titles of Great Commander, Prince of Zion, Comte de Jerusalem, Director of the Holy College, &c. &c.

any side but the east, and there the nature of the ground (boggy) offers great obstacles to any besieging operations. It is Smith's intention to congregate his followers there, until he accumulates a force that can defy any thing that can be brought against him.

Nauvoo is a Hebrew word, and signifies a beautiful habitation for a man, carrying with it the idea of rest. It is not, however, considered by the Mormons as their final home, but as a resting-place; they only intend to remain there till they have gathered a force sufficient to enable them to conquer Independence (Missouri), which, according to them, *is one of the most fertile, pleasant, and desirable countries on the face of the earth, possessing a soil unsurpassed by any region.* Independence they consider their Zion, and they there intend to rear their great temple, the corner stone of which is already laid. There is to be the great gathering-place for all the saints, and, in that delightful and healthy country, they expect to

find their Eden and build their New Jerusalem.

What passed between Joe Smith and myself I feel not at liberty to disclose; in fact, publicity would interfere with any future plans. I will only say, that the prophet received me with the greatest cordiality, and confirmed the offers which his agents had made to me when I was among the Comanches. When, however, I came to the point, and wished to ascertain whether the Mormons would act up to the promises of their leaders, I perceived, to my great disappointment, that the "means," at least, for the present—the operative means —were not yet ready to be put in motion. According to him, the Foxes, Osages, Winnebegoes, Sioux, and Mennomonie Indians would act for him at a moment's notice; and, on my visiting the Foxes to ascertain the truth of these assertions, I discovered that they had indeed promised to do so, provided that, previously, the Mormons should have fulfilled

certain promises to them, the performance of which I knew was not yet in the power of the Mormons.

In the meanwhile I heard from Joe Smith himself how God had selected him to obtain and be the keeper of the divine bible; and the reader will form his own idea of Joe Smith by the narrative. The day appointed was the 22nd of September, and Joe told me that on that day—

"He arose early in the morning, took a one-horse waggon of some one that had staid over-night at his house, and, accompanied by his wife, repaired to the hill which contained the book. He left his wife in the waggon by the road, and went alone to the hill, a distance of thirty or forty rods. He then took the book out of the ground, hid it in a tree top, and returned home. The next day he went to work for some time in the town of Macedon, but about ten days afterwards, it having been suggested that some one had got his book, his

wife gave him notice of it; upon which, hiring a horse, he returned home in the afternoon, staid just time enough to drink a cup of tea, went in search of his book, found it safe, took off his frock, wrapt it round his treasure, put it under his arm, and ran all the way home, a distance of about two miles. He said he should think that, being written on plates of gold, it weighed sixty pounds, but, at all events, was sure it was not less than forty. On his return he was attacked by two men in the woods, knocked them both down, made his escape, and arrived safe at home with his burden."

The above were the exact words of Smith, to which he adds, somewhere in his translation of the book, that had it not been for the supernatural virtues of the stone he carried with him, virtues which endowed him with divine strength and courage, he would never have been able to undergo the fatigues and conquer the obstacles he encountered during that frightful night.

Thus Smith gets possession of his precious manuscript. But, alas! 'tis written in Egyptian hieroglyphics. Joe calls to his assistance the wonderful stone, "the gift of God," and, peeping hastily through it, he sees an angel pointing somewhere towards *a miraculous pair of spectacles!!!* Yes, two polished pieces of crystal were the humble means by which the golden plates were to be rendered comprehensible. By the bye, the said spectacles are a heavy, ugly piece of workmanship of the last century; they are silver-mounted, and bear the maker's name, plainly engraved, "Schneider, Zurich."

The Book of Mormon was published in the year 1830. Since that period its believers and advocates have propagated its doctrines and absurdities with a zeal worthy of a better cause. Through every state of the Union, and in Canada, the apostles of this wild delusion have disseminated its principles and duped thousands to believe it true. They have crossed

the ocean, and in England have made many converts; recently some of their missionaries have been sent to Palestine. Such strenuous exertions having been, and still being made, to propagate the doctrines of this book, and such fruits having already appeared from the labours of its friends, it becomes a matter of some interest to investigate the history of this strange delusion, and, although it does not deserve it, treat the subject seriously.

The Book of Mormon purports to be the record or history of a certain people who inhabited America previous to its discovery by Columbus. According to the book, this people were the descendants of one Lehi, who crossed the ocean from the eastern continent to that of America. Their history and records, containing prophecies and revelations, were engraven, by the command of God, on small plates, and deposited in the hill Comora, which appears to be situated in Western New York. Thus was preserved an account of this race (together with

their religious creed) up to the period when the descendants of Laman, Lemuel, and Sam, who were the three eldest sons of Lehi, arose and destroyed the descendants of Nephi, who was the youngest son. From this period the descendants of the eldest sons "dwindled in unbelief," and "became a dark, loathsome, and filthy people." These last-mentioned are the present American Indians.

The plates above mentioned remained in their depository until 1827, when they were found by Joseph Smith, jun., who was directed in the discovery by the angel of the Lord. On these plates were certain hieroglyphics, said to be of the Egyptian character, which Smith, by the direction of God, being instructed by inspiration as to their meaning, proceeded to translate.

It will be here proper to remark, that a narrative so extraordinary as that contained in the Book of Mormon, translated from hieroglyphics, of which even the most learned have

but a limited knowledge, and that, too, by an ignorant man, who pretended to no other knowledge of the characters than what he derived from inspiration, requires more than ordinary evidence to substantiate it. It will, therefore, be our purpose to inquire into the nature and degree of testimony which has been given to the world to substantiate the claims of this extraordinary book.

In the first place, the existence of the plates themselves has ever since their alleged discovery been in dispute. On this point it would be extremely easy to give some proofs, by making an exhibition of them to the world. If they are so ancient as they are claimed to be, and designed for the purpose of transmitting the history of a people, and if they have lain for ages deposited in the earth, their appearance would certainly indicate the fact. What evidence, then, have we of the *existence* of these plates? Why, none other than the mere *dictum* of Smith himself and the certifi-

cates of eleven other individuals, who say that they have seen them; and upon this testimony we are required to believe this most extraordinary narrative.

Now, even admitting, for the sake of argument, that these witnesses are all honest and credible men, yet what would be easier than for Smith to deceive them? Could he not easily procure plates and inscribe thereon a set of characters, no matter what, and then exhibit them to the intended witnesses as genuine? What would be easier than thus to impose on their credulity and weakness? And if it were necessary to give them the appearances of antiquity, a chemical process could effect the matter. But we do not admit that these witnesses were honest; for six of them, after having made the attestation to the world that they had seen the plates, left the Church, thus contradicting that to which they had certified. And one of these witnesses, Martin Harris, who is frequently mentioned in the Book of

Covenants — who was a high-priest of the Church—who was one of the most infatuated of Smith's followers—who even gave his property in order to procure the publication of the Book of Mormon, afterwards seceded from the Church. Smith, in speaking of him in connection with others, said that they were so far beneath contempt, that a notice of them would be too great a sacrifice for a gentleman to make.

Some of the Mormons have said that a copy of the plates was presented to Professor Anthon, a gentleman standing in the first rank as a classical scholar, and that he attested to the faithfulness of the translation of the Book of Mormon. Now, let us read what the professor himself has to say on this matter. In a letter recently published he expresses himself thus :—

" Many years ago, the precise date I do not now recollect, a plain-looking countryman called upon me, with a letter from Dr. Samuel L. Mitchell, requesting me to examine and give my opinion upon a certain paper, marked

with various characters, which the doctor confessed he could not decipher, and which the bearer of the note was very anxious to have explained. A very brief examination of the paper convinced me that it was not only a mere hoax, but a very clumsy one. The characters were arranged in columns, like the Chinese mode of writing, and presented the most singular medley I ever beheld. Greek, Hebrew, and all sorts of letters, more or less distorted, either through unskilfulness or from actual design, were intermingled with sundry delineations of half-moons, stars, and other natural objects, and the whole ended in a rude representation of the Mexican zodiac. The conclusion was irresistible, that some cunning fellow had prepared the paper in question, for the purpose of imposing upon the countryman who brought it, and I told the man so, without any hesitation. He then proceeded to give me the history of the whole affair, which convinced me

that he had fallen into the hands of some sharper, while it left me in great astonishment at his simplicity."

The professor also states that he gave his opinion in writing to the man, that "the marks on the paper appeared to be merely an imitation of various alphabetic characters, and had no meaning at all connected with them."

The following letter, which I received, relative to the occupation of Joe Smith, as a treasure finder, will probably remind the reader of the character of Dousterswivel, in Walter Scott's tale of the Antiquary. One could almost imagine, that either Walter Scott had borrowed from Joe, or that Joe had borrowed from the great novelist.

"I first became acquainted with Joseph Smith, senior, and his family, in 1820. They lived at that time in Palmyra, about one mile and a half from my residence. A great part of their time was devoted to digging for money;

especially in the night-time, when, they said, the money could be most easily obtained. I have heard them tell marvellous tales respecting the discoveries they have made in their peculiar occupation of money-digging. They would say, for instance, that in such and such a place, in such a hill, or a certain man's farm, there were deposited kegs, barrels, and hogsheads of coined silver and gold, bars of gold, golden images, brass kettles filled with gold and silver, gold candlesticks, swords, &c. &c. They would also say that nearly all the hills in this part of New York were thrown by human hands, and in them were large caves, which Joseph, jun., could see, by placing a stone of singular appearance in his hat, in such a manner as to exclude all light; at which time they pretended he could see all things within and under the earth; that he could spy within the above-mentioned caves large gold bars and silver plates; that he could also discover the spirits in whose charge these treasures were,

clothed in ancient dresses. At certain times, these treasures could be obtained very easily; at others, the obtaining of them was difficult. The facility of approaching them depended in a great measure on the state of the moon. New moon and Good Friday, I believe, were regarded as the most favourable times for obtaining these treasures. These tales, of course, I regarded as visionary. However, being prompted by curiosity, I at length accepted their invitation to join them in their nocturnal excursions. I will now relate a few incidents attending these excursions.

"Joseph Smith, sen., came to me one night, and told me that Joseph, jun., had been looking in his stone, and had seen, not many rods from his house, two or three kegs of gold and silver, some feet under the surface of the earth; and that none others but the elder Joseph and myself could get them. I accordingly consented to go, and early in the evening repaired to the place of deposit. Joseph, sen., first made

a circle, twelve or fourteen feet in diameter: 'This circle,' said he, 'contains the treasure.' He then stuck in the ground a row of witch-hazel sticks around the said circle, for the purpose of keeping off the evil spirits. Within this circle he made another, of about eight or ten feet in diameter. He walked around three times on the periphery of this last circle, muttering to himself something I could not understand. He next stuck a steel rod in the centre of the circles, and then enjoined profound silence, lest we should arouse the evil spirit who had the charge of these treasures. After we had dug a trench of about five feet in depth around the rod, the old man, by signs and motions, asked leave of absence, and went to the house to inquire of the son the cause of our disappointment. He soon returned, and said, that Joe had remained all the time in the house, looking in his stone and watching the motions of the evil spirit; that he saw the spirit come

up to the ring, and as soon as it beheld the cone which we had formed around the rod, it caused the money to sink. We then went into the house, and the old man observed that we had made a mistake in the commencement of the operation; 'If it had not been for that,' said he, 'we should have got the money.'

"At another time, they devised a scheme by which they might satiate their hunger with the flesh of one of my sheep. They had seen in my flock of sheep a large, fat, black wether. Old Joseph and one of the boys came to me one day, and said, that Joseph, jun., had discovered some very remarkable and valuable treasures, which could be procured only in one way. That way was as follows:—that a black sheep should be taken on the ground where the treasures were concealed; that, after cutting its throat, it should be led around a circle while bleeding; this being done, the wrath of the

evil spirit would be appeased, the treasures could then be obtained, and my share of them would be four-fold. To gratify my curiosity, I let them have the sheep. They afterwards informed me that the sheep was killed pursuant to commandment; but, as there was some mistake in the process, it did not have the desired effect. This, I believe, is the only time they ever made money-digging a profitable business. They, however, had constantly around them a worthless gang, whose employment it was to dig for money at night, and who, during day, had more to do with mutton than money.

" When they found that the better classes of people of this vicinity would no longer put any faith in their schemes for digging money, they then pretended to find a gold bible, of which they said, the Book of Mormon was only an introduction. This latter book was at length fitted for the press. No means were taken by any individual to suppress its publi-

cation; no one apprehended danger from a book originating with individuals who had neither influence, honesty, nor honour. The two Josephs and Hiram promised to shew me the plates after the Book of Mormon was translated; but afterwards, they pretended to have received an express commandment, forbidding them to shew the plates. Respecting the manner of obtaining and translating the Book of Mormon, their statements were always discordant. The elder Joseph would say, that he had seen the plates, and that he knew them to be gold; at other times he would say, they looked like gold; and at other times he asserted he had not seen the plates at all.

"I have thus briefly stated a few of the facts, in relation to the conduct and character of this family of Smiths; probably sufficient has been stated without my going into detail.

"WILLIAM STAFFORD."

The following is a curious document from one of the very individuals who printed the Mormon Bible:—

"Having noticed in a late number of the *Signs of the Times* a notice of a work entitled 'Mormon Delusions and Monstrosities,' it occurred to me that it might, perhaps, be of service to the cause of truth to state one circumstance, relative to the authenticity of the Book of Mormon, which occurred during its publication, at which time I was a practical printer and engaged in the office where it was printed, and became familiar with the men and their principles, through whose agency it was 'got up.'

"The circumstance alluded to was as follows:—We had heard much said by Martin Harris, the man who paid for the printing, and the only one in the concern worth any property, about the wonderful wisdom of the translators of the mysterious plates, and we resolved to test their wisdom. Accordingly,

after putting one sheet in type, we laid it aside, and told Harris it was lost, and there would be a serious defection in the book in consequence, unless another sheet, like the original, could be produced. The announcement threw the old gentleman into great excitement; but, after a few moments' reflection, he said he would try to obtain another. After two or three weeks, another sheet was produced, but no more like the original than any other sheet of paper would have been, written over by a common schoolboy, after having read, as they had, the manuscript preceding and succeeding the lost sheet. As might be expected, the disclosure of this trick greatly annoyed the authors, and caused no little merriment among those who were acquainted with the circumstance. As we were none of us *Christians*, and only laboured for the 'gold that perisheth,' we did not care for the delusion, only so far as to be careful to avoid it ourselves and enjoy the hoax. *Not one* of the

hands in the office where the wonderful book was printed ever became a convert to the system, although the writer of this was often assured by Harris, that if he did not, he would be destroyed in 1832.

"T. N. S. TUCKER."

"*Groton, May* 23*rd,* 1842."

CHAPTER XII.

Let us now examine into the political views of the Mormons, and follow Smith in his lofty and aspiring visions of sovereignty for the future. He is a rogue and a swindler,—no one can doubt that; yet there is something grand in his composition. Joe, the mean, miserable, half-starved money-digger of western New York, was, as I have before observed, cast in the mould of conquerors, and out of that same clay which Nature had employed for the creation of a Mahomet.

His first struggle was successful; the greater portion of his followers surrounded him in Kirkland, and acknowledged his power, as that

of God's right hand; while many individuals from among the better classes repaired to him, attracted by the ascendency of a bold genius, or by the expectation of obtaining a share in his fame, power, and glory.

Kirkland, however, was an inland place; there, on every side, Smith had to contend with opposition; his power was confined and his plans had not sufficient room for development. He turned his mind towards the western borders of Missouri: it was but a thought; but with him, rapid action was as much a natural consequence of thought as thunder is of lightning. Examine into the topography of that country, the holy Zion and promised land of the Mormons, and it will be easy to recognize the fixed and unchangeable views of Smith, as connected with the formation of a vast empire.

For the last twelve or fifteen years the government of the United States has, through a mistaken policy, been constantly engaged

in sending to the western borders all the eastern Indian tribes that were disposed to sell their land, and also the various tribes who, having rebelled against their cowardly despotism, had been overpowered and conquered during the struggle. This gross want of policy is obvious.

Surrounded and demoralized by white men, the Indian falls into a complete state of *décadence* and *abrutissement*. Witness the Choctaw tribes that hover constantly about Mobile and New Orleans; the Winnibegoes, who have of late come into immediate contact with the settlers of Wisconsin; the Pottawatomies, on both shores of Lake Michigan; the Miamis of North Indiana, and many more. On the contrary, the tribes on the borders, or in the wilderness, are on the increase. Of course, there are a few exceptions, such as the Kanzas, or the poor Mandans, who have lately been almost entirely swept away from the earth by the small-pox. Some of the smaller tribes

may be destroyed by warfare, or they may incorporate themselves with others, and thus lose their name and nationality; but the increase of the Indian population is considerable among the great uncontrolled nations; such as the Chippewas and Dahcotahs (Siouxes), of the north United States; the Comanches and the Pawnees, on the boundaries, or even in the very heart, of Texas; the Shoshones (Snakes), on the southern limits of Oregon; and the brave Apaches of Sonora, those bold Bedouins of the Mexican deserts, who, constantly on horseback, wander, in immense phalanxes, from the eastern shores of the Gulf of California to the very waters of the Rio Grande.

Admitting, therefore, as a fact, that the tribes on the borders do increase, in the same ratio with their material strength, grows also their invincible, stern, and unchangeable hatred towards the American. In fact, more or less, they have all been ill-treated and abused, and

every additional outrage to one tribe is locked up in the memory of all, who wait for the moment of retaliation and revenge. In the Wisconsin war (Black Hawk, 1832), even after the poor starved warriors had surrendered themselves by treaty, after a noble struggle, more than two hundred old men, women, and children were forced by the Americans to cross the river without boats or canoes. The poor things endeavoured to pass it with the help of their horses; the river there was more than half a mile broad, and while these unfortunates were struggling for life against a current of nine miles an hour, they were treacherously shot in the water.

This fact is known to all the tribes—even to the Comanches, who are so distant. It has satisfied them as to what they may expect from those who thus violate all treaties and all faith. The remainder of that brave tribe is now dwelling on the west borders of Ioway, but their wrongs are too deeply dyed with

their own blood to be forgotten even by generations, and their cause is ready to be espoused by every tribe, even those who have been their hereditary enemies; for what is, after all, their history but the history of almost every Indian nation transplanted on the other side of the Mississippi?

This belt of Indian tribes, therefore, is rather an unsafe neighbour, especially in the event of a civil war or of a contest with England. Having themselves, by a mistaken policy, collected together a cordon of offended warriors, the United States will some day deplore, when too late, their former greediness, cowardice, and cruelty towards the natural owners of their vast territories.

It is among these tribes that Joe Smith wishes to lay the foundation of his future empire; and, settling at Independence, he was interposing as a neutral force between two opponents, who would, each of them, have purchased his massive strength and effective

energy with the gift of supremacy over an immense and wealthy territory. As we have seen, chance and the fortune of war have thrown Smith and the Mormons back on the eastern shores of the Mississippi, opposite the entrance of Desmoines river; but when forced back, the Mormons were an unruly and turbulent crowd, without means or military tactics; now, such is not the case. Already, the prophet has sent able agents over the river; the Sacs and Foxes, the same tribe we have just spoken of as the much-abused nation of Wisconsin, and actually residing at about eighty miles N.N.W. from Nauvoo, besides many others, are on a good understanding with the Latter-day Saints. A few bold apostles of Mormonism have also gone to the far, far west, among the unconquered tribes of the prairies, to organize an offensive power, ever ready for action.

Thus, link after link, Smith extends his influence, which is already felt in Illinois, in

Iowa, in Missouri, at Washington, and at the very foot of the Rocky Mountains. Moreover, hundreds of Mormons, without avowing their creed, have gone to Texas, and established themselves there. They save all their crops, and have numerous cattle and droves of horses, undoubtedly to feed and sustain a Mormon army on any future invasion. Let us now examine further into this cunning and long-sighted policy, and we shall admire the great genius that presides over it. We are not one of those, so common in these days, who have adopted the *nil admirari* for their motto. Genius, well or ill guided, is still genius; and if we load with shame the former life of Smith and his present abominable religious impositions, still we are bound to do justice to that conquering spirit which can form such vast ideas, and work such a multitude to his will.

The population of Texas does not amount to seventy thousand souls, among whom there are twenty-five different forms of religion.

Two-thirds of the inhabitants are scoundrels, who have there sought a refuge against the offended laws of their country. They are not only a curse and a check to civilization, but they reflect dishonour upon the remaining third portion of the Texians, who have come from distant climes, for the honest purposes of trade and agriculture. This mongrel and mixed congregation of beings, though firmly united in one point (war with Mexico, and that in the expectation of a rich plunder), are continually at variance on other points. Three thousand Texians would fight against Mexico, but not two hundred against the Mormons; and that for many reasons: government alone, and not an individual, would be a gainer by a victory; in Texas, not a soul cares for any thing but himself. Besides, the Mormons are Yankees, and can handle a rifle, setting aside their good drilling and excellent discipline. In number, they would also have the advantage; while I am now writing, they can muster five

thousand well-drilled soldiers, and, in the event of an invasion of Texas, they could easily march ten thousand men from the Sabine to the Rio Grande, from the Red River to the Gulf of Mexico. Opposition they will not meet. A year after the capture, the whole of Texas becomes Mormon, while Joe—king, emperor, Pharaoh, judge, or regenerator—rules over a host of two hundred and fifty thousand devoted subjects.

Let our reader observe that these are not the wild utopias of a heated imagination. No; we speak as we do believe, and our intercourse with the Mormons, during our travels, has been sufficiently close to give us a clear insight into their designs for the future.

Joe's policy is, above all, to conciliate the Indians, and that once done, there will not be in America a power capable of successfully opposing him. In order to assist this, he joins them in his new faith. In admitting the Indians to be the "right, though guilty," des-

cendants of the sacred tribes, he flatters them with an acknowledgment of their antiquity, the only point on which a white can captivate and even blind the shrewd though untutored man of the wilds.

In explanation of the plans and proceedings of Joe Smith and the Mormons, it may not be amiss to make some remarks upon the locality which he has designed as the seat of his empire and dominion, and where he has already established his followers, as the destined instruments of his ambition.

According to the Mormon prophets, the whole region of country between the Rocky Mountains and the Alleghanies was, at a period of about thirteen hundred years ago, densely peopled by nations descended from a Jewish family, who emigrated from Jerusalem in the time of the prophet Jeremiah, some six or seven hundred years before Christ; immense cities were founded, and sumptuous edifices reared, and the whole land overspread

with the results of a high and extensive civilization.

The Book of Mormon speaks of cities with stupendous stone walls, and of battles, in which hundreds of thousands were slain. The land afterwards became a waste and howling wilderness, traversed by a few straggling bands or tribes of savages, descended from a branch of the aforesaid Jewish family, who, in consequence of their wickedness, had their complexion changed from white to red; but the emigrants from Europe and their descendants, having filled the land, and God having been pleased to grant a revelation by which is made known the true history of the past in America, and the events which are about to take place, he has also commanded the Saints of the Latter Day to assemble themselves together there, and occupy the land which was once held by the members of the true church.

The states of Missouri and Illinois, and the territory of Iowa, are the regions to which the

prophet has hitherto chiefly directed his schemes of aggrandizement, and which are to form the nucleus of the Mormon empire. The remaining states are to be *licked up* like salt, and fall before the sweeping falchion of glorious prophetic dominion, like the defenceless lamb before the mighty king of the forest.

I have given the results of my notes taken relative to the Mormons, not, perhaps, in very chronological order, but as I gathered them from time to time. The reader will agree with me, that the subject is well worth attention. Absurd and ridiculous as the creed may be, no creed ever, in so short a period, obtained so many or such devoted proselytes. From information I have since received, they may now amount to three hundred thousand; and they have wealth, energy, and unity—they have every thing—in their favour; and the federal government has been so long passive, that I doubt if it has the power to disperse them. Indeed, to obtain their political support, they

have received so many advantages, and, I may say, such assistance, that they are now so strong, that any attempt to wrest from them the privileges which have been conceded would be the signal for a general rising.

They have fortified Nauvoo; they can turn out a disciplined force as large as the States are likely to oppose to them, and, if successful, can always expect the co-operation of seventy thousand Indians, or, if defeated, a retreat among them, which will enable them to coalesce for a more fortunate opportunity of action. Neither do I imagine that the loss of their leader, Joe Smith, would now much affect their strength; there are plenty to replace him, equally capable, not perhaps to have formed the confederacy, religious and political, which he has done, but to uphold it, now that it is so strong. The United States appear to me to be just now in a most peculiar state of progression, and very soon the eyes of the whole world will be

directed towards them and the result of their institutions. A change is about to take place; what that change will be, it is difficult to say; but a few years will decide the question.

CHAPTER XIII.

HAVING now related the principal events which I witnessed, or in which I was an actor, both in California and in Texas, as these countries are still new and but little known (for, indeed, the Texians themselves know nothing of their inland country), I will attempt a topographical sketch of these regions, and also make some remarks upon the animals which inhabit the immense prairies and mountains of the wilderness.

Along the shores of the Pacific Ocean, from the 42° down to the 34° North, the climate is much the same; the only difference between the winter and summer being that the

nights of the former season are a little chilly. The causes of this mildness in the temperature are obvious. The cold winds of the north, rendered sharper still by passing over the snows and ices of the great northern lakes, cannot force their passage across the rocky chain south of the latitude 44° N., being prevented by a belt of high mountains or by impenetrable forests. To the eastward, on the contrary, they are felt very severely; not encountering any kind of obstacles, they sweep their course to the very shores of the Gulf of Mexico, so that in 26° N. latitude, on the southern boundaries of Texas, winter is still winter; that is to say, fire is necessary in the apartments during the month of January, and flannel and cloth dresses are worn; while, on the contrary, the same month on the shores of the Pacific, up to 40°, is mild enough to allow strangers from the south, and even the Sandwich islanders, to wear their light nankeen trowsers and gingham round-abouts.

There is also a wide difference between the two coasts of the continent during summer. In Upper Calefornia and the Shoshone territory, although the heat, from the rays of the sun, is intense, the temperature is so cooled both by the mountain and sea-breeze, as never to raise the mercury to more than 95° Fahrenheit, even in St. Diego, which lies under the parallel of 32° 39′; while in the east, from 27° in South Texas, and 30° at New Orleans, up to 49° upon Lake Superior, the mercury rises to 100° every year, and frequently 105°, 107° in St. Louis, in Prairie du Chien, Green Bay, St. Anthony's Falls, and the Lake Superior.

The *résumé* of this is simply that the climate of the western coast of America is the finest in the world, with an air so pure, that during the intense heat of summer a bullock, killed, cleansed, and cut into slices, will keep for months without any salting nor smoking.

Another cause which contributes to render these countries healthy and pleasant to live in

is, that there are, properly speaking, no swamps, marshes, nor bayous, as in the United States and in the neighbourhood of Acapulco and West Mexico. These lakes and bayous drying during summer, and exposing to the rays of the sun millions of dead fish, impregnate the atmosphere with miasma, generating typhus, yellow fever, dysenteries, and pulmonary diseases.

If the reader will look over the map I have sketched of the Shoshone country, he will perceive how well the land is watered; the lakes are all transparent and deep, the rivers run upon a rocky bottom as well as all the brooks and creeks, the waters of which are always cool and plentiful. One more observation to convince the reader of the superiority of the clime is, that, except a few ants in the forests, there are no insects whatever to be found. No musquitoes, no prairie horse-flies, no beetles, except the coconilla or large phosphoric fly of California, and but very few worms and caterpillars; the

consequence is, that there are but two or three classes of the smaller species of carnivorous birds; the large ones, such as the common and red-headed vulture and crow, are very convenient, fulfilling the office of general scavengers in the prairies, where every year thousands of wild cattle die, either from fighting, or, when in the central deserts, from the want of water. On the western coast, the aspect of the country, in general, is gently diversified; the monotony of the prairies in the interior being broken by *islands* of fine timber, and now and then by mountains projecting boldly from their bases. Near the sea-shore the plains are intersected by various ridges of mountains, giving birth to thousands of small rapid streams, which carry their cool and limpid waters to the many tributaries of the sea, which are very numerous between the mouth of the Calumet and Buonaventura. Near to the coast lies a belt of lofty pines and shady odoriferous magnolias, which extends in some places to the very beach

and upon the high cliffs, under which the shore is so bold that the largest man-of-war could sail without danger. I remember to have once seen, above the bay of San Francisco, the sailors of a Mexican brig sitting on the ends of their topsail yards, and picking the flowers from the branches of the trees as they glided by.

In that part of the country, which is intersected by mountains, the soil is almost everywhere mineral, while the mountains themselves contain rich mines of copper. I know of beds of gallena extending for more than a hundred miles; and, in some tracts, magnesian earths cover an immense portion of the higher ridges. Most of the sandy streams of the Shoshone territory contain a great deal of gold-dust, which the Indians collect twice a year and exchange away with the Mexicans, and also with the Arrapahoes.

The principal streams containing gold are tributaries to the Buonaventura, but there are

many others emptying into small lakes of volcanic formation. The mountains in the neighbourhood of the Colorado of the West, and in the very country of the Arrapahoes, are full of silver, and perhaps no people in the world can shew a greater profusion of this bright metal than these Indians.

The Shoshone territory is of modern formation, at least in comparison with the more southern countries where the Cordillieres and the Andes project to the very shores of the ocean. It is evident that the best portion of the land, west of the Buonaventura, was first redeemed from the sea by some terrible volcanic eruption. Until about two centuries ago, or perhaps less, these subterranean fires have continued to exercise their ravages, raising prairies into mountains, and sinking mountains and forests many fathoms below the surface of the earth; their sites now marked by lakes of clear and transparent water, frequently impregnated with a slight, though not unpleasant,

taste of sulphur; while precious stones, such as topazes, sapphires, large blocks of amethysts, are found every day in the sand and among the pebbles on their borders.

In calm days I have often seen, at a few fathoms deep, the tops of pine trees still standing in their natural perpendicular position. In the southern streams are found emeralds of very fine water; opals also are very frequently met with.

The formation of the rocks is in general basaltic, but white, black, and green marble, red porphyry, jaspar, red and grey granite, abound east of the Buonaventura. Quartz, upon some of the mountains near the seashore, is found in immense blocks, and principally in that mountain range which is designated in my map as the "Montagne du Monstre," at the foot of which were dug up the remains of the huge Saurian Lizard.

The greater portion of the country is, of course, prairie; these prairies are covered with

blue grass, muskeet grass, clovers, sweet prairie hay, and the other grasses common to the east of the continent of America. Here and there are scattered patches of plums of the green-gage kind, berries, and a peculiar kind of shrub oaks, never more than five feet high, yet bearing a very large and sweet acorn; ranges of hazel nuts will often extend thirty or forty miles, and are the abode of millions of birds of the richest and deepest dyes.

Along the streams which glide through the prairies, there is a luxuriant growth of noble timber, such as maple, magnolia, blue and green ash, red oak, and cedar, around which climb vines loaded with grapes. Near the sea-shores, the pine, both black and white, becomes exceedingly common, while the smaller plains and hills are covered with that peculiar species of the prickly pear upon which the cochineal insect feeds. All round the extinguished volcano, and principally in the neighbourhood of the hill Nanawa Ashta jueri è, the locality of

our settlement upon the banks of the Buonaventura, the bushes are covered with a very superior quality of the vanilla bean.

The rivers and streams, as well as the lakes of the interior, abound with fish; in the latter, the perch, trout, and carp are very common; in the former, the salmon and white-cat fish, the soft-shelled tortoise, the pearl oyster, the sea-perch (Lupus Maritimes), the ecrivisse, and hundred families of the "crevette species,' offer to the Indian a great variety of delicate food for the winter. In the bays along the shore, the mackarel and bonita, the turtle, and, unfortunately, the sharks, are very numerous; while on the shelly beach, or the fissures of the rocks, are to be found lobsters, and crabs of various sorts.

The whole country offers a vast field to the naturalist; the most common birds of prey are the bald, the white-headed eagle, the black and the grey, the falcon, the common hawk, the epervier, the black and red-headed vulture, the

raven and the crow. Among the granivorous, the turkey, the wapo (a small kind of prairie ostrich), the golden and common pheasant, the wild peacock, of a dull whitish colour, and the guinea-fowl; these two last, which are very numerous, are not indigenous to this part of the country, but about a century ago escaped from the various missions of Upper California, at which they had been bred, and since have propagated in incredible numbers; also the grouse, the prairie hen, the partridge, the quail, the green parrot, the blackbird, and many others which I cannot name, not knowing their generic denomination. The waterfowls are plentiful, such as swans, geese, ducks of many different species, and the Canadian geese with their long black necks, which, from November to March, graze on the prairies in thousands.

The quadrupeds are also much diversified. First in rank, among the grazing animals, I may name the mustangs, or wild horses, which

wander in the natural pastures in herds of hundreds of thousands. They vary in species and size, according to the country where they are found, but these found in California, Senora, and the western district of Texas, are the finest breed in the world. They were imported from Andalusia by the Spaniards, almost immediately after the conquest of Grenada, the Bishop of Leon having previously, by his prayers, "exorcised the devil out of their bodies."

Mr. Catlin says, that in seeing the Comanche horse, he was much disappointed; it is likely, Mr. Catlin having only visited the northern borders of Texas, and the poorest village of the whole Comanche tribe. If, however, he had proceeded as far as the Rio Puerco, he would have seen the true Mecca breed, with which the Moslems conquered Spain. He would have also perceived how much the advantages of a beautiful clime and perpetual pasture has improved these noble animals, making them superior to the primitive stock, both in size,

speed, and bottom. With one of them I made a journey of five thousand miles, and on arriving in Missouri, I sold him for eight hundred dollars. He was an entire horse, as white as snow, and standing seventeen and a half hands high. One thousand pounds would not have purchased him in England.

Next, the lordly buffaloes, the swift wild-goat, the deer, the antelope, the elk, the prairie dogs, the hare, and the rabbits. The carnivorous are the red panther, or puma,* the

* The puma, or red panther, is also called "American lion, cougar," and in the western states, "catamount." It was once spread all over the continent of America, and is even now found, although very rarely, as far north as Hudson's Bay. No matter under what latitude, the puma is a sanguinary animal; but his strength, size, and thirst of blood, vary with the clime.

I have killed this animal in California, in the Rocky Mountains, in Texas, and in Missouri; in each of these places it presented quite a different character. In Chili, it has the breadth and limbs approaching to those of the African lion; to the far north, it falls away in bulk, until it is as thin and agile as the hunting leopard. In Missouri and Arkansas, the puma will prey chiefly upon fowls and young pigs; it will run away from dogs, cows, horses, and even from goats. In Louisiana and Texas, it will run from man, but it fights the dogs, tears the

spotted leopard, the ounce, the jaguar, the grizzly black and brown bear, the wolf, black,

horses, and kills the cattle, even the wild buffalo, merely for sport. In the Anahuar, Cordillieres, and Rocky Mountains, it disdains to fly, becomes more majestic in its movements, and faces its opponents, from the grizzly bear to a whole company of traders ; yet it will seldom attack unless when cubbing. In Senora and California it is even more ferocious. When hungry, it will hunt by the scent, like the dog, with its nose on the ground. Meeting a trail, it follows it at the rate of twenty miles an hour, till it can pounce upon a prey ; a single horseman, or an army, a deer, or ten thousand buffaloes, it cares not, it attacks every thing.

I did not like to interrupt my narrative merely to relate a puma adventure ; but during the time that I was with the Comanches, a Mexican priest, who had for a long time sojourned as instructor among the Indians, arrived in the great village on his way to St. Louis Mi, where he was proceeding on clerical affairs. The Comanches received him with affection, gave him a fresh mule, with new blankets, and mustered a small party to accompany him to the Wakoes Indians.

The Padre was a highly talented man, above the prejudices of his cast ; he had lived the best part of his life in the wilderness among the wild tribes on both sides of the Anahuar, and had observed and learned enough to make him love " these children of nature." So much was I pleased with him, that I offered to command the party which was to accompany him. My request was granted, and having provided ourselves with a long tent and the necessary provisions, we started on our journey.

Nothing remarkable happened till we arrived at the great chasm I have already mentioned, when, our provisions being much reduced, we pitched the tent on the very edge of the chasm, and dedicated half a day to hunting and grazing our

white, and grey; the blue, red, and black fox, the badger, the porcupine, the hedgehog, and

horses. A few deer were killed, and to avoid a nocturnal attack from the wolves, which were very numerous, we hung the meat upon the cross pole inside of the tent. The tent itself was about forty feet long, and about seven in breadth; large fires were lighted at the two ends, piles of wood were gathered to feed them during the night, and an old Indian and I took upon us the responsibility of keeping the fires alive till the moon should be up.

These arrangements being made, we spread our buffalo-hides, with our saddles for pillows, and, as we were all exhausted, we stretched ourselves, if not to sleep, at least to repose. The *padre* amused me, during the major portion of my watch, in relating to me his past adventures, when he followed the example of all the Indians, who were all sound asleep, except the one watching at the other extremity of the tent. This Indian observed to me, that the moon would rise in a couple of hours, and that, if we were to throw a sufficient quantity of fuel on the fire, we could also sleep without any fear. I replenished the fuel, and, wrapping myself in my blanket, I soon fell asleep.

I awoke suddenly, thinking I had heard a rubbing of some body against the canvass outside of the tent. My fire was totally extinguished, but, the moon having risen, gave considerable light. The hour of danger had passed. As I raised my head, I perceived that the fire at the other opening of the tent was also nearly extinguished; I wrapt myself still closer, as the night had become cool, and soon slept as soundly as before.

Once more I was awakened, but this time there was no delusion of the senses, for I felt a heavy pressure on my chest. I opened my eyes, and could scarcely refrain from crying out, when I perceived that the weight which had thus disturbed my

the coati (an animal peculiar to the Shoshone territory, and Upper California), a kind of

sleep was nothing less than the hind paw of a large puma. There he stood, his back turned to me, and seeming to watch with great avidity a deer-shoulder suspended above his head. My feelings at that moment were any thing but pleasant; I felt my heart beating high; the smallest nervous movement, which perhaps I could not control, would divert the attention of the animal, whose claws would then immediately enter my flesh.

I advanced my right hand towards the holster, under my head, to take one of my pistols, but the holsters were buttoned up, and I could not undo them, as this would require a slight motion of my body. At last I felt the weight sliding down my ribs till it left me; and I perceived, that in order to take a better leap at the meat, the puma had moved on a little to the left, but in so doing one of his fore paws rested upon the chest of the *padre*. I then obtained one of the pistols, and was just in the act of cocking it under my blanket, when I heard a mingled shriek and roar. Then succeeded a terrible scuffling. A blanket was for a second rolled over me; the canvass of the tent was burst open a foot above me; I heard a heavy fall down the chasm; the *padre* screamed again; by accident, I pulled the trigger and discharged my pistol, and the Indians, not knowing what was the matter, gave a tremendous war-whoop.

The scene I have described in so many lines was performed in a few seconds. It was some time before we could recover our senses and inquire into the matter. It appeared, that at the very moment the puma was crouching to take his leap, the *padre*, awaking, gave the scream; this terrified the animal, who dashed through the canvass of the tent above me with the *padre's* blanket entangled in his claws.

mixture of the fox and wolf breed, fierce little animals with bushy tails and large heads, and a quick, sharp bark.

The amphibious are the beaver, the fresh-water and sea otter; the musk-rat, and a species of long lizard, with sharp teeth, very like the cayman as regards the head and tail, but with a very short body. It is a very fierce animal, killing whatever it attacks, dwelling in damp, shady places, in the juncks, upon the borders of some lakes, and is much dreaded by the Indians; fortunately, it is very scarce. The Shoshones have no particular name for it, but

Poor *padre!* he had fainted, and continued senseless till daylight, when I bled him with my penknife. Fear had produced a terrible effect upon him, and his hair, which the evening before was as black as jet, had now changed to the whiteness of snow. He never recovered, notwithstanding the attention shewn to him by the Indians who accompanied him to St. Louis. Reason had forsaken its seat, and, as I learned some time afterwards, when, being in St. Louis, I went to the mission to inquire after him, he died two days after his arrival at the Jesuits' college.

As to the puma, the Indians found it dead at the bottom of the chasm, completely wrapped in the blanket, and with most of its bones broken.

would sooner attack a grizzly bear than this animal, which they have a great dread of, sometimes calling it the evil spirit, sometimes the scourge, and many other such appellations. It has never yet been described by any naturalist, and I never yet saw one dead, although I have heard of their having been killed.

In Texas, the country presents two different aspects, much at variance with each other, the eastern borders and sea-coast being only a continuation of the cypress swamps, mud creeks, and canebrakes of south Arkansas, and west Louisiana; while, on the contrary, the north and west offer much the same topography as that of the countries I have just delineated. The climate in Texas is very healthy two hundred miles from the sea, and one hundred west of the Sabine, which forms the eastern boundary of Texas; but to the east and south the same diseases and epidemics prevail as in Louisiana, Alabama, and the Floridas.

The whole of Texas is evidently of recent formation, all the saline prairies east of the Rio Grande being even now covered with shells of all the species common to the Gulf of Mexico, mixed up with skeletons of sharks, and now and then with petrified turtle, dolphin, rock fish, and bonitas. A few feet below the surface, and hundreds of miles distant from the sea, the sea-sand is found; and although the ground seems to rise gradually as it recedes from the shores, the southern plains are but a very little elevated above the surface of the sea until you arrive at thirty degrees north, when the prairies begin to assume an undulating form, and continually ascend till, at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, they acquire a height of four and five thousand feet above the level of the sea.

Texas does not possess any range of mountains with the exception that, one hundred miles north from San Antonio de Bejar, the San Seba hills rise and extend themselves in

a line parallel with the Rocky Mountains, as high as the green peaks in the neighbourhood of Santa Fé. The San Seba hills contain several mines of silver, and I doubt not that this metal is very common along the whole range east of the Rio Grande. Gold is also found in great quantities in all the streams tributary to the Rio Puerco, but I have never heard of precious stones of any kind.

Excepting the woody districts which border Louisiana and Arkansas, the greater proportion of Texas is prairie; a belt of land commences upon one of the bends of the river Brasos, spreads northward to the very shores of the Red River, and is called by the Americans "The cross timbers;" its natural productions, together with those of the prairies, are similar to those of the Shoshone country. Before the year 1836, and I dare say even now, the great western prairies of Texas contained more animals and a greater variety of species than any other part of the world within the same number

of square miles; and I believe that the Sunderbunds in Bengal do not contain monsters more hideous and terrible than are to be found in the eastern portion of Texas, over which nature appears to have spread a malediction. The myriads of snakes of all kinds, the unaccountable diversity of venomous reptiles, and even the deadly tarantula spider or "vampire" of the prairies, are trifles compared with the awful inhabitants of the eastern bogs, swamps, and muddy rivers. The former are really dangerous only during two or three months of the year, and, moreover, a considerable portion of the trails are free from their presence, owing to the fires which break out in the dry grass almost every fall. There the traveller knows what he has to fear, and, independent of the instinct and knowledge of his horse, he himself keeps an anxious look-out, watching the undulating motion of the grass, and ever ready with his rifle or pistols in the event of his being confronted with bears, pumas, or any other fero-

cious quadruped. If he is attacked, he can fight, and only few accidents have ever happened in these encounters, as these animals always wander alone with the exception of the wolf, from whom, however, there is but little to fear, as, in the prairies, this animal is always glutted with food and timid at the approach of man.

As the prairie wolf is entirely different from the European, I will borrow a page of Ross Cox, who, having had an opportunity of meeting it, gives a very good description of its manners and ways of living. Yet as this traveller does not describe the animal itself, I will add, that the general colour of the prairie wolf is grey mixed with black, the ears are round and straight, it is about forty inches long, and possesses the sagacity and cunning of the fox.

"The prairie wolves," says Cox, "are much smaller than those which inhabit the woods. They generally travel together in numbers, and

a solitary one is seldom met with. Two or three of us have often pursued from fifty to one hundred, driving them before us as quickly as our horses could charge.

"Their skins are of no value, and we do not therefore waste much powder and ball in shooting them. The Indians, who are obliged to pay dear for their ammunition, are equally careful not to throw it away on objects that bring no remunerating value. The natural consequence is, that the wolves are allowed to multiply; and some parts of the country are completely overrun by them. The Indians catch numbers of them in traps, which they set in the vicinity of those places where their tame horses are sent to graze. The traps are merely excavations covered over with slight switches and hay, and baited with meat, &c., into which the wolves fall, and being unable to extricate themselves, they perish by famine or the knife of the Indian. These destructive animals annually destroy numbers of horses, particularly

during the winter season, when the latter get entangled in the snow, in which situation they become an easy prey to their light-footed pursuers, ten or fifteen of which will often fasten on one animal, and with their long fangs in a few minutes separate the head from the body. If, however, the horses are not prevented from using their legs, they sometimes punish the enemy severely; as an instancce of this, I saw one morning the bodies of two of our horses which had been killed the night before, and around were lying eight dead and maimed wolves; some with their brains scattered about, and others with their limbs and ribs broken by the hoofs of the furious animals in their vain attempts to escape from their sanguinary assailants."

Although the wolves of America are the most daring of all the beasts of prey on that continent, they are by no means so courageous or ferocious as those of Europe, particularly in Spain or the south of France, in which coun-

tries they commit dreadful ravages both on man and beast; whereas a prairie wolf, except forced by desperation, will seldom or never attack a human being.

I have said that the danger that attends the traveller in the great prairies is trifling; but it is very different in the eastern swamps and mud-holes, where the enemy, ever on the watch, is also always invisible, and where the speed of the horse and the arms of the rider are of no avail, for they are then swimming in the deep water, or splashing, breast-deep, in the foul mud.

Among these monsters of the swamps and lagoons of stagnant waters, the alligator ranks the first in size and voracity; yet man has nothing to fear from him; and though there are many stories among the cotton planters about negroes being carried away by this immense reptile, I do firmly believe that few human beings have ever been seized alive by the American alligator. But although harmless to

man, the monster is a scourge to all kinds of animals, and principally to dogs and horses. It often happens that a rider loses his track through a swamp or a muddy canebrake, and then, if a new comer in East Texas, he is indubitably lost. While his poor steed is vainly struggling in a yielding mass of mud, he will fall into a hole, and before he can regain his footing, an irresistible force will drag him deeper and deeper, till smothered. This force is the tail of the alligator, with which this animal masters its prey, no matter how strong or heavy, when once within its reach. M. Audubon has perfectly described its power: I will repeat his words:—

"The power of the alligator is in its great strength, and the chief means of its attack or defence is its large tail, so well contrived by nature to supply his wants, or guard him from danger, that it reaches, when curved into a half-circle, to his enormous mouth. Woe be to him who goes within the reach of this tre-

mendous thrashing instrument; for, no matter how strong or muscular, if human, he must suffer greatly, if he escape with life. The monster, as he strikes with this, forces all objects within the circle towards his jaws, which, as the tail makes a motion, are opened to their full stretch, thrown a little sideways to receive the object, and, like battering-rams, to bruise it shockingly in a moment."

Yet, as I have said, the alligator is but little formidable to man. In Western Louisiana and Eastern Texas, where the animal is much hunted for the sake of his grease, with which the planters generally oil the machinery of their mills, little negroes are generally sent into the woods, during the fall, "grease-making," as at that season the men are better employed in cotton-picking or storing the maize. No danger ever happens to the urchins during these expeditions, as, keeping within the sweep of the tail, they contrive to chop it off with an axe.

M. Audubon says :—

"When autumn has heightened the colouring of the foliage of our woods, and the air feels more rarified during the nights and the early part of the day, the alligators leave the lakes to seek for winter-quarters, by burrowing under the roots of trees, or covering themselves simply with earth along their edges. They become then very languid and inactive, and, at this period, to sit or ride on one would not be more difficult than for a child to mount his wooden rocking-horse. The negroes, who now kill them, put all danger aside by separating, at one blow with an axe, the tail from the body. They are afterwards cut up in large pieces, and boiled whole in a good quantity of water, from the surface of which the fat is collected with large ladles. One single man kills oftentimes a dozen or more of large alligators in the evening, prepares his fire in the woods, where he has erected a camp for the purpose, and by morning has the oil extracted."

As soon as the rider feels his horse sinking, the first movement, if an inexperienced traveller, is to throw himself from the saddle, and endeavour to wade or to swim to the canebrakes, the roots of which give to the ground a certain degree of stability. In that case, his fate is probably sealed, as he is in immediate danger of the "cawana." This is a terrible and hideous monster, with which, strange to say, the naturalists of Europe are not yet acquainted, though it is too well known to all the inhabitants of the streams and lagoons tributary to the Red River. It is an enormous turtle or tortoise, with the head and tail of the alligator, not retractile, as is usual among the different species of this reptile; the shell is one inch and a half thick, and as impenetrable as steel. It lies in holes in the bottom of muddy rivers or in the swampy canebrakes, and measures often ten feet in length and six in breadth over the shell, independent of the head and tail, which must give often to this dreadful

monster the length of twenty feet. Such an unwieldy mass is not, of course, capable of any rapid motion; but in the swamps I mention they are very numerous, and the unfortunate man or beast going astray, and leaving for a moment the small patches of solid ground, formed by the thicker clusters of the canes, must of a necessity come within the reach of one of these powerful creature's jaws, always extended and ready for prey.

Cawanas of a large size have never been taken alive, though often, in draining the lagoons, shells have been found measuring twelve feet in length. The planters of Upper Western Louisiana have often fished to procure them for scientific acquaintances, but, although they take hundreds of the smaller ones, they could never succeed to drag on shore any of the large ones after they have been hooked, as these monsters bury their claws, head, and tail so deep in the mud, that no power short of steam can make them relinquish their hold.

Some officers of the United States army and land surveyors, sent on the Red River by the government at Washington for a month, took up their residence at Captain Finn's. One day, when the conversation had fallen upon the cawana, it was resolved that a trial should be made to ascertain the strength of the animal. A heavy iron hand-pike was transformed by a blacksmith into a large hook, which was fixed to an iron chain belonging to the anchor of a small steam-boat, and as that extraordinary fishing-tackle was not of a sufficient length, they added to it a hawser, forty fathoms in length and of the size of a woman's wrist. The hook was baited with a lamb a few days old, and thrown into a deep hole ten yards from the shore, where Captain Finn knew that one of the monsters was located; the extremity of the hawser was made fast to an old cotton-tree.

Late in the evening of the second day, and as the rain poured down in torrents, a negro

slave ran to the house to announce that the bait had been taken, and every one rushed to the river side. They saw that, in fact, the hawser was in a state of tension, but the weather being too bad to do any thing that evening, they put it off till the next morning.

A stout horse was procured, who soon dragged the hawser from the water till the chain became visible, but all further attempts of the animal were in vain; after the most strenuous exertion, the horse could not conquer the resistance or gain a single inch. The visitors were puzzled, and Finn then ordered one of the negroes to bring a couple of powerful oxen, yoked to a gill, employed to drag out the stumps of old trees. For many minutes the oxen were lashed and goaded in vain; every yarn of the hawser was strained to the utmost, till, at last, the two brutes, uniting all their strength in one vigorous and final pull, it was dragged from the water, but the monster had escaped. The hook had straightened, and to

its barb were attached pieces of thick bones and cartilages, which must have belonged to the palate of the monster.

The unfortunate traveller has but little chance of escaping with life, if, from want of experience, he is foundered in the swampy canebrakes. When the horse sinks and the rider leaves the saddle, the only thing he can do is to return back upon his track; but let him beware of these solitary small patches of briars, generally three or four yards in circumference, which are spread here and there on the edges of the canebrakes, for there he will meet with deadly reptiles and snakes unknown in the prairies; such as the grey-ringed water moccassin, the brown viper, the black congo with red head and the copper head, all of whom congregate and it may be said make their nests in these little dry oases, and their bite is followed by instantaneous death.

These are the dangers attending travellers in the swamps, but there are many others to

be undergone in crossing lagoons, rivers, or small lakes. All the streams, tributaries of the Sabine and of the Red River below the great bend (which is twenty miles north of the Lost Prairie), have swampy banks and muddy bottoms, and are impassable when the water is too low to permit the horses to swim. Some of these streams have ferries, and some lagoons have floating bridges in the neighbourhood of the plantations; but as it is a new country, where government has as yet done nothing, these conveniencies are private property, and the owner of a ferry, not being bound by a contract, ferries only when he chooses and at the price he wishes to command.

I will relate a circumstance which will enable the reader to understand the nature of the country, and the difficulties of overland travelling in Texas. The great Sulphur Fork is a tributary of the Red River, and it is one of the most dangerous. Its approach can only be made on both sides through belts of swampy

canebrakes, ten miles in breadth, and so difficult to travel over, that the length of the two swamps, short as it is, cannot be passed by a fresh and strong horse in less than fourteen hours. At just half-way of this painful journey the river is to be passed, and this cannot be done without a ferry, for the moment you leave the canes, the shallow water begins, and the bottom is so soft, that any object touching it must sink to a depth of several fathoms. Till 1834, no white man lived in that district, and the Indians resorted to it only during the shooting season, always on foot and invariably provided with half-a-dozen of canoes on each side of the stream for their own use or for the benefit of travellers. The Texians are not so provident nor so hospitable.

As the white population increased in that part of the country, a man of the name of Gibson erected a hut on the southern bank of the stream, constructed a flat-boat, and began ferrying over at the rate of three dollars a head.

As the immigration was very extensive, Gibson soon grew independent, and he entered into a kind of partnership with the free bands which were already organized. One day, about noon, a land speculator presented himself on the other side of the river, and called for the ferry. At that moment the sky was covered with dark and heavy clouds, and flashes of lightning succeeded each other in every direction; in fact, every thing proved that the evening would not pass without one of those dreadful storms so common in that country during the months of April and May. Gibson soon appeared in his boat, but instead of casting it loose, he entered into a conversation.

"Where do you come from, eh?"

"From the settlements," answered the stranger.

"You've a ticklish, muddish kind of a river to pass."

"Aye," replied the other, who was fully aware of it.

"And a blackish, thunderish, damned storm behind you, I say."

The traveller knew that too, and as he believed that the conversation could as well be carried on while crossing over, he added:

"Make haste, I pray, my good man; I am in a hurry, and I should not like to pass the night here in these canes for a hundred dollars."

"Nor I, for a thousand," answered Gibson. "Well, stranger, what will you give me to ferry you over?"

"The usual fare, I suppose—two or three dollars."

"Why, that may do for a poor man in fine weather, and having plenty of time to spare, but I be blessed if I take you for ten times that money now that you are in so great a hurry and have such a storm behind."

The traveller knew at once he had to deal with a blackguard, but as he was himself an

Arkansas man of the genuine breed, he resolved to give him a "Roland for an Oliver."

"It is a shameful imposition," he cried; "how much do you want after all?"

"Why, not a cent less than fifty dollars."

The stranger turned his horse round, as if he would go back; but, after a few moments, he returned again.

"Oh," he cried, "you are a rogue, and take the opportunity of my being in so great a hurry. I'll give you what you want, but mind I never will pass this road again, and shall undoubtedly publish your conduct in the Arkansas newspapers."

Gibson chuckled with delight; he had humbugged a stranger, and did not care a fig for all the newspapers in the world; so he answered, "Welcome to do what you please;" and, untying the boat, he soon crossed the stream. Before allowing the stranger to enter the ferry, Gibson demanded the money, which

was given to him under the shape of five ten-dollar notes, which he secured in his pocket, and then rowed with all his might.

On arriving on the other side, the stranger led his horse out of the boat, and while Gibson was stooping down to fix the chain, he gave him a kick on the temple, which sent him reeling and senseless in his boat; then taking back his own money, he sprung upon his saddle, and passing before the cabin, he gently advised Gibson's wife to "go and see, for her husband had hurt himself a little in rowing."

These extortions are so very frequent, and now so well known, that the poorer classes of emigrants never apply for the ferries, but attempt the passage just as they can, and when we call to mind that the hundreds of cases which are known and spoken of must be but a fraction of those who have disappeared without leaving behind the smallest clue of their former existence and unhappy

fate, the loss of human life within the last four or five years must have been awful.

Besides the alligator and the cawana, there are in these rivers many other destructive animals of a terrible appearance, such as the devil jack diamond fish, the saw fish, the horn fish, and, above all, the much dreaded gar. The first of these is often taken in summer in the lakes and bayous, which, deprived of water for a season, are transformed into pastures; these lakes, however, have always a channel or deeper part, and there the devil jack diamond has been caught, weighing four hundred pounds and upwards.

The saw fish is peculiar to the Mississippi and its tributaries, and varies in length from four to eight feet. The horn fish is four feet long, with a bony substance on his upper jaw, strong, curved, and one foot long, which he employs to attack horses, oxen, and even alligators, when pressed by hunger. But the

gar fish is the most terrible among the American ichthyology, and a Louisiana writer describes it in the following manner:—

"Of the gar fish there are numerous varieties. The alligator gar is sometimes ten feet long, and is voracious, fierce, and formidable, even to the human species. Its dart in rapidity equals the flight of a bird; its mouth is long, round, and pointed, thick set with sharp teeth; its body is covered with scale so hard as to be impenetrable by a rifle-bullet, and which, when dry, answers the purposes of a flint in striking fire from steel; its weight is from fifty to four hundred pounds, and its appearance is hideous; it is, in fact, the shark of rivers, but more terrible than the shark of the sea, and is considered far more formidable than the alligator himself."

It is, in fact, a most terrible animal. I have seen it more than once seizing its prey, and dragging it down with the rapidity of an arrow. One day while I was residing at Captain Finn's,

upon the Red River, I saw one of these monsters enter a creek of transparent water. Following him for curiosity, I soon perceived that he had not left the deep water without an inducement, for just above me there was an alligator devouring an otter.

As soon as the alligator perceived his formidable enemy, he thought of nothing but escape to the shore; he dropped his prey and began to climb, but he was too slow for the gar fish, who, with a single dart, closed upon it with extended jaws, and seized it by the middle of the body. I could see plainly through the transparent water, and yet I did not perceive that the alligator made the least struggle to escape from the deadly fangs; there was a hissing noise as that of shells and bones crushed, and the gar fish left the creek with his victim in his jaws, so nearly severed in two, that the head and tail were towing on each side of him.

Besides these, the traveller through rivers and

bayous has to fear many other enemies of less note, and but little, if at all, known to naturalists. Among these is the mud vampire, a kind of spider leech, with sixteen short paws round a body of the form and size of the common plate; the centre of the animal (which is black in any other part of the body) has a dark vermilion round spot, from which dart a quantity of black suckers, one inch and a half long, through which they extract the blood of animals; and so rapid is the phlebotomy of this ugly reptile, that though not weighing more than two ounces in its natural state, a few minutes after it is stuck on, it will increase to the size of a beaver hat, and weigh several pounds.

Thus leeched in a large stream, a horse will often faint before he can reach the opposite shore, and he then becomes a prey to the gar fish; if the stream is but small and the animal is not exhausted, he will run madly to the shore and roll to get rid of his terrible blood-

sucker, which, however, will adhere to him, till one or the other of them dies from exhaustion, or from repletion. In crossing the Eastern Texas bayous, I used always to descend from my horse to look if the leeches had stuck; the belly and the breast are the parts generally attacked, and so tenacious are these mud vampires, that the only means of removing them is to pass the blade of a knife under them and cut them off.

But let us leave these disgusting animals, and return to the upland woods and prairies, where nature seems ever smiling, and where the flowers, the birds, and harmless quadrupeds present to the eye a lively and diversified spectacle. One of the prettiest *coups d'œil* in the world is to witness the gambols and amusements of a herd of horses, or a flock of antelopes. No kitten is more playful than these beautiful animals, when grazing undisturbed in the prairies; and yet those who, like the

Indian, have time and opportunity to investigate, will discover vices in gregarious animals, hitherto attributed solely to man.

It would appear that, even among animals, where there is a society, there is a tyrant and paria. On board vessels, in a school, or anywhere, if man is confined in space, there will always be some one lording over the others, either by his mere brutal strength or by his character; and, as a consequence, there is also another, who is spurned, kicked, and beaten by his companions, a poor outcast, whom every body delights in insulting and trampling upon: it is the same among gregarious brutes. Take a flock of buffaloes or horses, or of antelopes; the first glance is always sufficient to detect the two contrasts. Two of the animals will stand apart from the herd, one proudly looking about, the other timid and cast down; and every minute some will leave their grazing, go and shew submission, and give a caress to the one, and a kick or a bite to the other.

Such scenes I have often observed, and I have also witnessed the consequence, which is, that the outcast eventually commits suicide, another crime supposed to be practised only by reasoning creatures like ourselves. I have seen horses, when tired of their paria life, walk round and round large trees, as if to ascertain the degree of hardness required; they have then measured their distance, and darting with furious speed against it, fractured their skull, and thus got rid of life and oppression.

I remember a particular instance; it was at the settlement. I was yet a boy, and during the hotter hours of the day, I used to take my books and go with one of the missionaries to study near a torrent, under the cool shade of a magnolia.

All the trees around us were filled with numerous republics of squirrels, scampering and jumping from branch to branch, and, forgetful of every thing else, we would sometimes watch their sport for hours together. Among them

we had remarked one, who kept solitary between the stems of an absynth shrub, not ten yards from our usual station. There he would lie motionless for hours basking in the sun, till some other squirrels would perceive him. Then they would jump upon him, biting and scratching till they were tired, and the poor animal would offer no resistance, and only give way to his grief by plaintive cries.

At this sight, the good padre did not lose the opportunity to inculcate a lesson, and after he had finished speaking, he would strike his hands together to terrify the assailants.

"Yes," observed I, using his own words, "it is nature."

"Alas! no," he would reply; "'tis too horrible to be nature; it is only one of the numerous evils generated from society." The padre was a great philosopher, and he was right.

One day, while we were watching this paria of a squirrel, we detected a young one slowly

creeping through the adjoining shrubs; he had in his mouth a ripe fruit, a parcimon, if I remember right. At every moment he would stop and look if he were watched, just as if he feared detection. At last he arrived near the paria, and deposited before him his offering to misery and old age.

We watched this spectacle with feelings which I could not describe; there was such a show of meek gratitude in the one and happiness in the other, just as if he enjoyed his good action. They were, however, perceived by the other squirrels, who sprang by dozens upon them; the young one with two bounds escaped, the other submitted to his fate. I rose, all the squirrels vanished except the victim; but that time, contrary to his habits, he left the shrub and slowly advanced to the bank of the river, and ascended a tree. A minute afterwards we observed him at the very extremity of a branch projecting over the rapid waters, and we heard his plaintive shriek. It was his farewell

to life and misery; he leaped into the middle of the current, which in a moment carried him to the shallow water a little below.

In spite of his old age, the padre waded into the stream and rescued the suicide. I took it home with me, fed it well, and in a short time its hair had grown again thick and glossy. Although left quite free, the poor animal never attempted to escape to the woods, and he had become so tame, that every time I mounted my horse, he would jump upon me and accompany me on my distant excursions. Eight or ten months afterwards he was killed by a rattle-snake, who surprised him sleeping upon my blanket, during one of our encampments.

END OF VOL. III.

J. L. COX & SONS,
PRINTERS TO THE HONOURABLE EAST-INDIA COMPANY,
74 & 75, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

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